THE

ILIAD OF HOMER.

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IN

English Hexameter Verse.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE first twelve books of this Translation of the entire Iliad were published in the spring of 1862, when they were honored with the notice, in journals and periodicals, of many able critics, including the distinguished names of Dr. Whewell and Lord Lindsay. The generally favourable tone of the criticisms then elicited, has induced a careful revision of those twelve books, and the translation of the twelve remaining books;—the completed work exhibiting, it is hoped, many marks of its having profited by an attentive consideration of the strictures and suggestions of which the former half was thought deserving by such competent judges.

The translation was commenced, undesignedly, and as a matter of experiment, after reading Mr. Kingsley's Andromeda; and it was continued, as an amusement, and without, in the first instance, any view to publication. This may account for the fact that the first book was, originally—and, possibly, may still be—as a whole, less close as a translation, and less regular in rhythm, than the subsequent books:—a circumstance somewhat unpropitious to a favorable impression; inasmuch as

that book, from its very position, as well as from its having, more frequently than any other portion of the poem, been experimented upon by part-translators, is naturally the most obvious to criticism.

The quasi-filial relation in which the translation stood to Mr. Kingsley's Andromeda, may account for that feature which was urged by some critics as a prominent ground of objection to it: viz., the retention of the Greek accentuation of the proper names. The Translator read, and he must own, admired, such lines as—

"There they set Andromedèn, most beautiful, shaped like a Goddess,"

and—

"Hebè, Harmoniè, and the golden Queen Aphrodìte,"

and he therefore thought—erroneously, as he now admits, although still admiring Mr. Kingsley's lines, above cited,—that the Greek accentuations should be *always* preserved. Further consideration, aided by the light of criticism, has, however, satisfied him that, as a *rule*, the effect of such retention is unpleasing to an English ear.[a] He has therefore, at the cost of much labor, eliminated it from the first twelve books, and has avoided it in the remaining twelve; except in some very rare cases, where the aggregation of proper names is such as to render it necessary, either to retain the accentuation of the

[a] See note subjoined to the list of proper names, *infrà*.

original, or to abandon the principle, here professedly adopted, of a line-by-line translation. When it is said that the present professes to be a line-by-line translation, it is not meant that each one line of the original is *always* accurately represented by one line of the translation—although such is *usually* the case—but that, (with some very rare exceptions, mostly, if not altogether, occurring in the first and second books,) each paragraph of the original, is represented by the same number of lines in the translation. And in each of the books the identity of aggregate result is maintained. Upon this, as upon all other points, a translator has to strike a balance between advantages and disadvantages. The case is necessarily one for compromises. Few, however, who have themselves tried to translate the Iliad, or who are intimately familiar with the poem, can doubt that a close adherence to the peculiar structure, is all but essential to a due rendering of the spirit of the original. The antithetical arrangement of that original, and the continual embodiment of separate images, in separate lines, or couplets —or even portions—of lines, can never be adequately represented by a translation which admits systematically of a breaking up and fusion of the ideas of the great poet. The result is like that of a cross sea breaking up and destroying the magnificence of the long succession of those rolling waves which form Homer's favourite simile for his advancing armies, and which are so suggestive of his own lines.

Upon the vexed question of metre, the Translator can

only say that now, on the completion of his task, he sees no reason to regret having selected the Hexameter. In it, and in it alone, is it possible, he believes, to combine adequate fidelity to the original, with that vigor and rapidity of movement, without which a translation may reproduce the ideas of the poet, and may be an exceedingly elaborate, elegant, and artistic production, but is not Homer; any more than the obelisk of Luxor is the Matterhorn. The want of rapidity of movement may be considered to be the one great drawback from the merits of the recent translation by Lord Derby, as also from those of the far less known, yet more vigorous, translation now in course of publication by Mr. Charles Ichabod Wright: and is, perhaps, a defect inherent in the English heroic blank verse. In writing thus, the Translator must not be supposed to be viewing with self-complacency his own efforts as compared with those of others; but merely to express his continued adherence to the metre which he originally selected; and which he believes has the sanction of a sufficient number of educated readers, to prevent the publication of an Hexameter translation of the Iliad, of even average merit, being treated as a literary intrusion. He is also satisfied that very many of those who now entertain a sense of dislike to the metre, would feel differently if their ears were but habituated to its use. The difficulty arising from the acquired habit of associating certain metres with Classical poetry, and other metres with English poetry, may—to use the words of a writer whose

opinions even Lord Derby would probably hesitate to describe as "pestilent heresies," or himself as a "silly one"—viz., Oliver Goldsmith—"be surmounted by an effort of attention, and a little practice; and in that case we should be as well pleased with English as with Latin hexameters" (Goldsmith's Essays, vol. ii., p. 265). One disadvantage certainly attaches to the use of the Hexameter, as compared with that of the ordinary blank-verse heroic metre; and that is that it is less easily handled, and requires a greater amount of labor on the part of the translator. Sometimes, however, the original seems to be susceptible of reproduction in the English metre, with less than the average amount of difficulty; and, as instances of this—not by way of expressing any self-satisfaction at the actual result, but merely by way of statement that the result, whatever it may be, has been attained with comparative ease to himself—the Translator may perhaps venture to refer to the marshalling of the army, Book II. v. 455 to 494; the well-known scene on the walls, Book III. v. 121 to 244; the commencement of the first battle, Book IV. v. 422 to 544; the great speech of Achilles, Book IX. v. 307 to 429; the acts of Agamemnon and Odysseus, Book XI. v. 1 to 496; the scene between Zeus and Hère, Book XIV. v. 153 to 352; the deaths of Cebriones and Patroclus, Book XVI. v. 726 to 869; the description of the shield of Achilles, Book XVIII. v. 478 to 607; the arming of Achilles, Book XIX. v. 364 to 424; and the funeral games, Book XXIII. v. 249 to 897.

The Translator may perhaps be allowed, without being taxed with presumption, to express his entire adherence to the views of those critics who regard the Iliad, with some rare exceptions, as the work of a single mind.

The edition which he has generally used, has been that published by Dr. Trollope, founded on the text of Heyne.

A few foot-notes, and a list of Greek proper names with their Latin synonyms, are inserted, for the benefit of the general reader.

In conclusion, he has only to thank those friends who have favoured him with advice and assistance during the progress of the work. Among whom he has much satisfaction in being permitted to name the learned Master of Merchant Taylors, the Rev. Dr. Hessey, and—the Translator's colleague in another and very different department—Mr. Wm. Hayes. To the latter gentleman—one of the most acute and elegant of legal writers since the days of Fearne; and who, but for an unfortunate disinclination to publication, would now be as eminent in general, as he has for many years been in professional, literature—the Translator is indebted for a revision of the proofs of the entire work, and for many valuable suggestions and corrections.

27, Cleveland Square, Hyde Park,
5th August, 1865.

LIST OF PROPER NAMES.

In Greek		*In Latin, or English,*
AGELAIA	Representing	A name of MINERVA.
AÏDÒNEUS	,,	PLUTO.
APHRODÌTE	,,	VENUS.
APOLLO	,,	APOLLO.
ÀRES [a]	,,	MARS.
ARTEMIS	,,	DIANA.
ATHÈNE [a]	,,	MINERVA.
CRONOS	,,	SATURN.
CRONÏDES, or CRONÏON	,,	A Son of SATURN, generally JUPITER.
DEMÈTER	,,	CERES.
DIONÝSUS	,,	BACCHUS.
ENNOSIGAIOS—the Earth-shaker	,,	A title of NEPTUNE.
ENYO	,,	BELLONA.
ERYS	,,	DISCORD.
HADES	,,	PLUTO.
HEPHÆSTUS	,,	VULCAN.
HERÀCLES	,,	HERCULES.
HÈRE [a]	,,	JUNO.

[a] In the first, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth books, which were printed before the intermediate and subsequent parts of the translation, the accent has unfortunately been frequently affixed to the final syllables of these three names: an error which the reader is requested to correct.

In Greek		*In Latin, or English,*
HERMES	Representing	MERCURY.
IRIS	,,	IRIS.
LETO	,,	LATONA.
ODYSSEUS	,,	ULYSSES.
ONEIROS	,,	A DREAM.
PERSEPHONEIA	,,	PROSERPINE.
POSEIDON	,,	NEPTUNE.
THETIS	,,	THETIS.
ZEUS	,,	JUPITER.

THE

ILIAD OF HOMER.

BOOK THE FIRST.

"Chryses' prayer:—and the pest on the host:—and the strife of the Princes."

Sing, divine Muse, sing the implacable wrath of Achilleus!
Heavy with death and with woe to the banded sons of Achaia!
Many the souls of the mighty, the souls of redoubtable heroes,
Hurried by it prematurely to Hades. The vultures and wild-dogs
Tore their tombless limbs. Yet thus did the will of the Highest
Work to an end[a]—from the day when strife drove madly asunder,
Atreus' son, king of men; and the Godlike leader Achilleus.

Say—from whom of the Gods, at first did the bitter contention
Seize on the chiefs?—From Him:—from the son of Zeus and of Leto!
He, on the leaguering armies, in wrath at the sin of the monarch,
Sent a fell pest:—for the monarch sinn'd, and the people were slaughter'd:
Slain for the crime of the king, who dishonor'd the priest of Apollo.

Suppliant Chryses came, to the swift-sailing ships of Achaia:
Suppliant, seeking his child[b]—with priceless gifts for her ransom;
Bearing aloft his sceptre, the golden staff of his priesthood,

[a] Viz., the death of Hector, as preliminary to the fall of Troy.

[b] Chryseis—who had been allotted to Agamemnon out of the spoil of Cilician Thebes, which had been stormed by Achilles.

Wreath'd with the sacred fillets:—and much besought all the Achaians
Atreus' sons most of all men, who order'd and govern'd the people.

"Hear me, O Atreus' sons, and ye warrior ranks of Achaia!
Yours be it soon, by the aid of the Gods who inhabit Olympus,
Storming the Trojan wall, to return in peace to your homesteads.
Only restore me my child!—take the ransom I bring to redeem her!—
Take it, and honor the God:—son of Zeus:—far-darting Apollo!"

Thus did the father pray.—Content were the other Achaians,
Both to give ear to the priest, and to take the rich gift of the ransom.
Little, however, did this suit the mood of the King Agamemnon:
Fiercely the elder he drave from the galleys, and sternly rebuked him.

"Never, again, old man, let me find thee here by the galleys!
Linger not mid them now, nor return thou hither hereafter!
Fillets, and sacred staff, perchance will little avail thee!
Whom thou seekest is mine: and mine, be sure, I retain her!
Mine, in my palace at Argos, away from the land of her fathers;
Plying the loom[c], and sharing my bed, till age come upon her.
Hence then!—tempt me no more!—but begone if thou lovest thy safety!"—

And—in his fear of the King—he obey'd that heavy commandment.
Mourning, he paced by the margin of Ocean eternally sounding—
Mourning, yet silent; 'til far from the galleys—and then to Apollo
Deeply and long did he pray—to the son of the fair-tress'd Leto.

"God of the silver bow—thou that art the protector of Chrysa[d];
Guardest Cilla divine; over Tenedos mightily rulest;
Smintheus[e]:—list to my prayer!—If e'er on the walls of thy temple,

[c] This was not, in those ages, a necessarily servile occupation.

[d] Chrysa seems to have been a district near Cilician Thebes, where there was a temple, of which Chryses, father of Chryseis, was the priest.

[e] A title of Apollo; said to be derived from his having destroyed a plague of mice.

Flowery wreaths of mine have bloom'd—if e'er, by my offering,
Bulls, and the blood of goats, have nourish'd the flame of thine altars;
Tear for tear that I shed, let a Danaan[f] die by thine arrows!"

Earnestly pray'd his priest; and the prayer rose to Phœbus Apollo!
Down from the peaks of Olympus, in all of the pride of his anger,
Down the avenger came:—and the silver bow on his shoulder,
Clang'd as he rush'd along; and the shafts rattled loud in the quiver,
E'en as alive with the wrath of the God:—as like night he descended.
Planted afar from the fleet, on the fleet flew his terrible arrows.
Dire was the clang of the silvery string as it sounded and bounded!
First upon mules, and dogs swift-limb'd, and then upon mortals,
Hurtled the shafts[g]; and fast thro' the air rose flames from the death-piles.
Nine long days thro' the camp raged the shafts of the God:—on the tenth day,
Came into Council the chiefs, convened by the voice of Achilleus.
Herè urged him on—for the white-armed Queen of Olympus
Mourn'd for the Danaan hosts, and lamented the deaths of her people.

Then, when the chiefs were met—all rang'd in the crowded assemblage,
Rising above their ranks, thus spake the swift-footed Achilleus:—

"Sure, it were better, Atrides, that we, the remains of the people,
Wandering back as we came, should fly, if we can, from destruction!
War and pest combined are thinning the ranks of Achaia.
Let us at least consult some prophet or skilful diviner,
E'en an expounder of dreams—(for Zeus sends dreams to the dreamer,)—

[f] The word "Greek," however familiar to the reader of Pope, or Cowper, or Lord Derby, does not occur in the original of the Iliad. The expressions, "Danai," "Argives," and "Achaians," are frequently used to denote the entire body of the besieging army, although properly applicable only to particular portions or classes. The translator has generally preserved in each place the peculiar designation which occurs in the original.

[g] It is said that such is the order in which Oriental pestilences usually affect the animal creation.

He may reveal what cause thus enrages Phœbus Apollo.
Whether a broken vow, or gift withheld from his altar,
Angers the God:—and whether the blood of lambs and of sucklings,
Spotless, slain at his shrine, may appease and stay the destroyer."

Thus did he speak; then sat: and then uprose in the presence,
Calchas, Thestor's son;—most skilful far of diviners!
Both the dim past, and the present, he knew; and the mystical future.
By his prophetic art, it was given by Phœbus Apollo,
He, unto Ilion's shores, had guided the ships of Achaia.
Now, much moved for the weal of the people, he spake to Achilleus.

"Thou, O beloved of Zeus, O Achilleus, bidst me discover
Whence is the wrath of the King, of the far-darting archer Apollo.
At thy command, then, I speak:—but do thou, by the faith of a monarch,
Swear with the word of thy mouth and the might of thine arm to protect me.
Little, perchance, will the tale I must tell please a notable leader;
Mightily ruling in Argos;—renown'd among all the Achaians.
Monarch to private man is in sooth an unequal opponent.
Haply within his breast he may keep down the wrath for an instant:
But it is brooding there: it still has an end to accomplish;
Deep in his heart.—Then consider, and say if you wish to protect me."

Then uprose in his place and spake in answer Achilleus.

"Boldly speak as thou know'st!—Speak all, as the Gods have disclosed it!
For, by the God Zeus-loved, by Apollo's self, do I swear it,
—E'en by the God whose oracular will by thy mouth is revealèd,—
None, while I tread earth, and live in the light of the sunshine,
None of the Danaan host upon thee lays finger to harm thee,
Name as thou wilt.—Were it even the best and the bravest among us;
E'en were it *he*, first of all the Achaians, the King Agamemnon."

Then did the blameless Seer take courage;—and thus he proceeded.

"Neither for broken vow, nor gift kept back from his altar,
But for his priest—whom *he*, Agamemnon, wrong'd—is the vengeance;
And for the maid denied, and slighted price of the ransom.—
Therefore the shafts of the God have flown!—And yet will they pierce us,
Nor shall his grievous hand be amoved, nor the pest be abated,
Till unto Chrysa, the maid of the eyes so bright in their blackness,
Ransomless home be returned;—with hecatombs, meet for the altars
Of the offended God.—Then, perchance, he may pardon and spare us."

Calchas spake, and sat:—and then, amid all the assemblage,
Rose up the hero Atrides, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon.
Furious he rose;—and the black veins filled in the breast of the monarch:
And in his rolling eyes flash'd brightly the terrible anger.
Bent on the Seer were his wrathful brows, and in wrath he addressed him.

"Prophet of ill! that tongue never yet spake of peace to thy monarch!
Dear unto thee is the art which promiseth ill to thy neighbour!
Little the good that thou speak'st, nor greater the good that thou doest.
And is it now thy task to suggest to the Danaan leaders,—
Ill-boding priest as thou art,—that for me have the shafts of the day-God,
Smitten the host? for that I, their King, the rich gifts of the ransom
Spurn'd, as the price of Chrysèis?—Dear to my soul is the maiden;
Hoped-for light of my home!—More dear than my spouse Clytemnestra;
Wife of my youth as she was!—My prize is her equal in all things:
Equal in face, in form, in mind, and in gifts of the artist.
Yet, as she is, I am ready to yield her, if safety demand it!
Dearer to me than all this are the safety and weal of my people.
But some prize at once should be mine in the place of the maiden[h].
Ill befitting it were, that your monarch, alone of the Argives,
Prizeless remain! for ye see that my own first prize is departing."

Then to the King in reply spake the great swift-footed Achilleus.

[h] It must be remembered that Agamemnon had already been offered an ample ransom for Chrysèis; and by his refusal to accept it had brought the plague upon the army.

"Atreus' glorious son,—yet fonder of booty than glory,—
How shall Achaia's sons provide this prize thou requirest?
No common fund is ours laid up for the calls of the future.
Fast as we win our spoil from the foes that spoil is divided:
Hard and unwelcome task were it now to recall the division.
Yield thou the maid to the God:—and be sure that the sons of Achaia
Triply, ay and quadruply, will grant thee a rich compensation,
When, by the aid of Zeus, Troy's ramparts crumble before us."

Then to the chief in reply spake the King of men—Agamemnon.

"Think not, brave as thou art, most mighty and Godlike Achilleus,
Think not thus to cajole me, for truly the scheme will avail not.
Deem not that I, at thy bidding, will tamely relinquish the maiden,
Thou still holding thine!—Dost bid me thus calmly resign her?
If so, some other prize, in her place, let the noble Achaians
Find for me, worthy the damsel, and such as my fancy approves of.
If they refuse, I myself will seize, in my right as the monarch,
Thine, or the prize of Ajax, or even that of Odysseus[1]:
Seize, and retain!—Right sore will, I trow, be the mind of the loser.
But any future time may suffice us for this:—for the present
Launch we a long dark galley at once on the breast of the ocean,
Mann'd by a chosen crew; with hecatombs meet for the altars
Of the offended God:—Chrysèis, daintily featured,
Let her embark:—and let some chieftain renown'd in the Council,
Ajax, or Idomeneus, or the Godlike leader Odysseus,
Or let Pelides' self,—most terrible hero among us,—
Make an atonement for all; and appease and avert the destroyer."

Then, with a low'ring look, spake the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus.

"Cloth'd as thou art in thine impudence, ever regardful of plunder,
Why, at command of thee, should one of the sons of Achaia

[1] Or Ulysses.

Stir from his native home, or mix in the strife of the valiant?
Not for offences to me, came I here as the foe of the Trojans.
Me did they never injure—no herds, no steeds, have they plundered:—
Never have they in Phthia, that fertile cradle of heroes,
Wasted my crops:—right safe from their arms is the vale of my fathers;
Girt by the shadowy hills, by the belt of the sonorous ocean!—
Only for *thee*, dog-faced as thou art, in thy cause, and thy brother's,
Even to work thy revenge upon Troy, come we here to the battle:
Yielding service to princes who neither esteem nor regard it.
And dost thou venture to threaten to pilfer the prize which the Argives
Gave to me—petty reward, as it is, of my toil and my labors?
Diverse in sooth our lots in the day when the sons of Achaia
Sack and level to dust any populous town of the Trojans.
Full of the work are my hands in the toil and heat of the battle:
Mine is the weight of the war: but when men share in the plunder
Thine are the great rewards; while I, worn down by the conflict,
Blest with a niggard gift, must march content to my vessels.
But to the shores of Phthia the black-beak'd prows of my galleys
Home shall return:—better far it were so!—What then will Atrides
Gain of plunder or spoil, by himself left sole and deserted?"

Then to the chief in reply spake the King of men—Agamemnon.

"Fly, by all means, if thine anger impel thee!—I will not entreat thee!—
Hope not for prayers from *me!*—There are chieftains many beside thee,
Ready to honor their King:—and Zeus himself will protect me.——
Hatefullest art thou to me amid all the high princes among us!—
All thy delight is in strife, and in war, and the tumult of battle.
Strong if thou art, it is God who has given thee strength to presume on.
Hence then!—Fly, with thy ships, and thyself, and thy doughty companions!—
Rule as thou pleasest thy Myrmidon vassals!—As nought I regard thee,
Thee and thine anger alike:—and here it is *mine* to threaten.
True is it Chryses' daughter is claimed by Phœbus Apollo:
Home shall the maiden return, in my ship, with my chosen companions.

But, in the self-same day, Brisèis, daintily featured,
Thine own prize,[k] do I seize; within thy tent do I seize her.
Thus, all strong as thou art, my sway shall be known as the stronger.
So may none other be ready to deem him my peer, or oppose me."

So spake the King:—right sore was the strife in the breast of Achilleus.
Much did he doubt whether, baring the blade of his terrible broadsword,
Bursting the crowd right asunder, to strike at Atrides, and slay him;
Or to contain his wrath, and vanquish the storm of his passion.
Still in his mind and soul was the strife of conflicting emotions.
Half he unsheath'd his blade.—But down came Pallas Athenè,
Down from the skies she descended; (the white-arm'd Queen of Olympus,
Sent her, for both of the chiefs were guarded and loved by the Goddess)—
Gliding behind him, she finger'd the golden locks of Achilleus,
Only revealed unto him—none else saw the heavenly vision.
Thrill'd to her finger Pelides: and turning his head he beheld her;
Saw, and knew her well;—for her eyes shone fearfully on him:—
Knew her for Pallas Athenè; and rapidly thus he address'd her.

"Why thus here upon Earth, child of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder?
Is it, that thou may'st note the injurious pride of Atrides?—
Then, do thou hear me predict—and see the prediction accomplished—
Soon shall his forfeit life pay the price of his insolent rashness!"

Then, in reply to the chieftain, the blue-eyed Goddess Athenè.—

"Not to see this, but to temper thy wrath, I descend from the heavens:
Nor do I come of myself; for the white-arm'd Herè has sent me.
He and thou both alike are guarded and loved by the Goddess.
Then put an end to the strife, nor draw that sword from its scabbard!
Use not the cold keen blade, but the keener edge of invective!

[k] Although the "prize" of Achilles, and living with him in a state of concubinage, the position of Brisèis seems to have been rather that of an intended wife than of an ordinary mistress. See Il. ix., v. 340; and 2 Gladstone's Hom. 496.

For of a truth I affirm,—and my words shall be surely accomplished,—
Presents of threefold value shall soon make costly atonement
For this insult foul !—So master thyself: and obey me !"

Thus, to the Goddess in answer, the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus.

" Meet is it, O thou divine One, that, e'en in the heat of my great wrath,
I should obey the command of the two ;—of thee and of Herè.—
Whoso gives ear to the Gods, to his prayer will the Gods be propitious."

Speaking he stay'd his hand from the silver hilt of his broadsword:
Sent to the scabbard the blade ;—and respected the words of the Goddess,
E'en of the Goddess Athenè.—And she up again to Olympus
Rose ;—to the home of the Gods, and of Zeus the Ægis-wielder.

Then did Pelides again, in accents of hate and of fury,
Speak, unto Atreus' son ;—in accents of bitter invective.

" Dog as thou art in face ; tame at heart as the deer of the woodlands ;
Sot of a king !—When wert *thou* ever seen, mid the lords of Achaia,
Arm'd in the van of fight ; or, in the more perilous ambush,
Winning the spoils of a foe ?—Not for thee such uncertain encounters !—
Thou lovest safer plunder—the plunder of friends not of foemen—
Ranging the camp of Achaia, to pilfer from those who oppose thee.
—King preying on thine own people ;—a king that rules over dastards ;—
Were they not such, Atrides, thy pride had ere this been abated !
List but a moment longer, and mark the great oath I am swearing !—
Even by this very sceptre—which, stripped of its leaves and its branches,
Never to know them again, left its parent stem on the mountains,
Never again to bud forth[1]—for the cold keen steel has dissever'd
Leaves, and shoots, and bark ; and thus do the sons of Achaia,
They who defend Heaven's right, and enforce the will of the Highest,

[1] Compare this with the sign of the miraculous budding of Aaron's staff.

Bear it, as sign of sway :—ay ! deep is the oath I am swearing ;—
When in their utmost need, when all of the sons of Achaia,
Yearn for Achilleus' help—they may yearn for, but shall not obtain it !
Then when, unequal to aid, thou beholdest the heaps of the dying
Piled by the arm of Hector,—the arm of the homicide Hector—
Bitterly then shalt thou rue, in remorse and in anguish of spirit,
Rue that day when thy madness dishonor'd the bravest Achaian."

Thus did Pelides speak :—and speaking he hurl'd his sceptre,
Golden-studded, to earth, at his feet :—and sat and was silent.
Equally stern sat Atrides.—To them, far renown'd in assembly,
Uprose the Pylian king, the melodious orator, Nestor.
Soft o'er his lips ran mellifluous words, as the running of honey.
Two generations of men, who had lived to the prime of their manhood,
Grew up and flourish'd with him, and had faded away and departed,
In Pylos, loved by the Gods :—and he ruled o'er the third generation.
Friend as he was of both of the princes, he rose and address'd them.

" Great, O alas, how great, is the grief this day of Achaia !
Great, how great, were the joy of Priam, the children of Priam,
Troy, and the sons of Troy, did they know of this mad contention,
'Twixt the two first of the host : best in council and bravest in battle.
Hear me, my friends, and conform to my words !—Ye are younger than I am !—
Chieftains of old I remember,—ay, chieftains mighty in prowess—
Mightier e'en than yourselves ; and they, when I spake, disobey'd not.
Ne'er have I seen such chiefs—mine eyes shall never behold such,—
Chiefs such as Peirithöus ; or as Dryas, first of the people ;
Cænëus ; and Exadius ; and the godlike man Polyphemus ;
Theseus, Ægeus' offspring, a warrior like the Immortals.
Strongest in fight were they, of all who on earth had their dwelling ;
Strongest in fight were they ; and fought, as was fit, with the strongest ;
Fought with the mountain-monsters[m], and utterly smote and subdued them.

[m] That is, according to some commentators, the Centaurs ; but there seems to be no sufficient reason for so describing them.

Such were my friends in youth:—such the comrades I met in my travel,
Far from the Apian realm;—and at their wish we were comrades.
'Mid them I fought as I might;—but not their equal in battle
Breathes there of mortal men, of men such as now are created.
These men heard me advise;—and as I advised they attended:
O be ye like unto them; for the words that I speak will avail you.
Great as thou art, O King, from Achilleus take not the damsel!—
Touch not the prize which he holds as the gift of the sons of Achaia!—
Neither do thou, O Pelides, indulge in unseemly contention
With him, the King!—for I tell thee this:—never yet was there monarch
Honor'd by Zeus as *he* is;—of all who rule with the sceptre.
Grant thou art strong in fight,—that a Goddess-mother has borne thee;—
Yet he excels in this,—his rule and sway are the wider.
Calm then thy wrath, O Atrides;—for I, even I, do entreat thee,
Pray thee to master thy hate to Achilleus:—who, as a bulwark,
Stands 'twixt the sons of Achaia, and all of the chances of battle."

Then to the sage, yet again, spake in answer the King Agamemnon.

"What thou hast said, O father, is true; right well hast thou spoken.
But that man seated there must still be the first of his fellows:
All are to yield unto him; he still is to lord it o'er others;
Still to dictate unto all.—But I trow he will find me his equal.
If he be strong in fight, by the gift of the Gods, the Immortals,
Is it their will he is thus to abound in abuse and invective?"

Then, interrupting the King, spake the Godlike leader Achilleus.

"Well should I merit the name of coward and spiritless dastard,
Were I to yield unto thee, and tamely submit to thy bidding.
Lay what commands thou wilt on the rest:—but to me, for the future,
Venture no more to dictate;—for I trow thou'lt find me thine equal!
But let me tell thee this—and my words they had best be remember'd—

Never again, for a girl[n], this hand draws sword on a foeman:
Neither on thee, nor on others:—my prize you may take, as you gave her.
But for the rest of my spoil, in the long dark hold of my galley,
Keep thine hands from it:—or touch it, King, if thou darest!
Dare but to venture the risk, and plenty are here for beholders;
Plenty to see that dark blood drip from the point of my warspear!"

Thus then, at last, did the chiefs put an end to the wordy contention:
Rise from their seats:—and there by the ships dismiss'd the assembly.
Peleus' son to his tents, and the well-curved sides of his galleys,
Went with Menœtius' son,[o] and the rest of his trusty attendants.
Atreus' son made ready a swift-sailing bark,—and within her
Twice ten chosen rowers; and hecatombs meet for the altars
Of the offended God:—Chrysèis, daintily featured,
She too went with the rest:—and in charge of the whole was Odysseus.
Soon were the whole on board, and tracking the waste of the waters.
Then at Atrides' word did the host perform a lustration:
Washing from all that defiles; and casting to sea the defilement.
Goats then and broadneck'd bulls, on the shore of the desolate Ocean,
Unto Apollo died:—whole hecatombs meet for his altars.
Curling roll'd to the skies the acceptable smoke of the victims.

Thus was the host employ'd.—But the monarch, the King Agamemnon,
Put not away his wrath, nor forgot his threat to Achilleus.
He to Talthybius, and to Eurybates, call'd and address'd them.
Heralds they of the King, and tried and trusty attendants.

"Go to Achilleus' tent—to the tent of haughty Pelides—
Seize and bring from thence Brisèis, daintily featured.
If he refuse to yield, ourself in person will seize her:—
Seize her by force of numbers:—perchance it would gall him the deeper!"—

[n] Referring to Helen, as well as to Brisèis.
[o] Patroclus, son of Menœtius.

Thus did the monarch speak, and he straitly enjoined, and dismissed them.
Slow and reluctant they went by the shore of the desolate salt sea.
Slowly they went, till on reaching the tents, and the Myrmidon galleys,
There did they light on the chief, in his tent, in the shade of his galley,
Seated apart :—as he saw them, grief fill'd the mind of Achilleus.
Fearing the hero's wrath, but mindful still of their own King,
Silent they stood :—no demand did they make; not a word did they utter.
Well did he understand their errand, and thus he address'd them.

" Messengers e'en as ye are, of Zeus as well as of mortals,
Heralds, all hail, approach !—Ye, truly, are blameless before me !—
Guilty alone your King; who by you lays claim to the damsel.
Bring then the damsel Brisèis, my Zeus-descended Patroclus !
Bring her, and let her depart !—But bear ye witness, O heralds;
Witness before the high Gods, everblest; in the presence of mortals;
E'en of the ruthless King;—when the time of his need overtakes him;
When I alone shall stand 'twixt him and utter destruction,
Utter destruction to him and to all[p]——But the man is a madman !
Past misfortune, to him brings no wise care for the future :
Not one saving thought for the weal of the sons of Achaia."

Thus did the hero speak; and his words were obey'd by Patroclus.
Forth from the tent did he bring Brisèis, daintily featured;
Bring her, and give to the men :—who return'd to the ships of Achaia.
Slowly and sad went the maiden away from the tent :—but Achilleus
Weeping, apart from the rest, sat him down by the wandering waters,
Close by the hoary sea :—and he steadfastly gazed on the billows
Heaving darkly; and stretch'd out his hands, and thus pray'd to his mother[q].

" Mother—for mother thou art—to a premature death thou hast borne me !

[p] The original thus breaks off in the middle of a sentence;—as if Achilles felt that it was useless to complete the threat which he had half uttered.

[q] Thetis.

Honor, at least, was my due from him who is throned on Olympus,
E'en from the Thunderer, Zeus[r] !—But no honor at all doth he give me !
Foul dishonor is mine, at the hands of the King Agamemnon :
He for himself has seized on my prize ;—has seized and retains her."

Weeping he spake ;—and his mother divine heard all that he utter'd ;
E'en in the caves of her sire, in the depths of the fathomless ocean.
Swift from the hoary main, she emerged as the mist of the morning ;
Came to her weeping son, and sat her down softly before him ;
Touch'd with her soothing hand, and call'd him by name and address'd him.

"Why these tears, O my son ?—What sorrow has come to thy bosom ? 360
Keep it not there conceal'd—let us know it, and share it together !"

Then, with a deep-drawn groan, spake the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus.

"Thou know'st all !—Why then should I tell thee a tale that thou knowest ?—
We attack'd sacred Thebè,—Eëtion's beautiful city,—
Storm'd and plunder'd the place, and hurried the spoil to the galleys.
Fairly the spoil was portion'd around by the sons of Achaia ;
Giving to Atreus' son Chrysèis, daintily featured.
Chryses, priest of the far-darting Deity,—priest of Apollo,—
Came to the swift-sailing ships of the well-mailed sons of Achaia,
Suppliant seeking his child, with priceless gifts for her ransom, 370
Bearing aloft his sceptre, the golden staff of his priesthood,
Wreath'd with the sacred fillets : and much besought all the Achaians ;
Atreus' sons most of all men, who ordered and governed the people.
Suppliant thus did he pray ; and content were the other Achaians,
Both to give ear to the priest, and to take the rich price of the ransom
Little however did this suit the mood of the King Agamemnon :
Fiercely the elder he drove from the galleys and sternly rebuked him.

[r] It appears, vide infra, book ix, v. 411, that Achilles had the choice of long life, or military glory ; and had selected the latter.

Wrathfully parted the priest, and pray'd in his wrath to Apollo ;
Pray'd, and his prayer was heard, for well did the God love his servant.
Soon on the Argive ranks flew his fatal shafts : and the people
Died in heaps around ; and wider still did his arrows
Range thro' the hosts of Achaia.—At last a skilful diviner
Rose and revealed the will of the God, the far-darting destroyer.
First then was I to advise that the wrath of the God be abated.
Rage seized Atrides' soul :—he rose up hasty in anger,
Dared to give word to a threat, and dared but now to perform it.
His prize, this very moment, the black-eyed sons of Achaia
Send unto Chryses, home ; with gifts for the shrine of Apollo.
Mine, even now is led far away from my tent by the heralds ;
Even the maid Brisèis, my gift from the sons of Achaia.
But do thou, O mother dear, if thou canst, aid thy son in his sorrow !
Go to the dome of Olympus ! to Zeus prefer thy petition !
If ever deed of thine, if ever thy word has availed him.
Oft have I heard thee tell, in the halls of my father I heard thee
Tell, how that thou by thyself, amid all of the race of Immortals,
Stood by the God of Storms, and saved him from utter destruction :
Saved him from shameful bonds, at the hands of the race of Olympus ;
Herè, mighty Poseidon, and virgin Pallas Athenè.
You to his rescue came, O Goddess, and saved him from fetters :
Brought to his aid on Olympus, the giant, the hundred-handed ;
Call'd by Immortals Briàreus ; known among men as Ægæon ;
For that in strength of arm his father was weaker than he was !—
Proud of his unmatch'd might did he sit by the side of Cronīon[s] ;
And the Gods saw, and fear'd, and paused, nor attempted to bind him.
Go then : remind him of this : clasp the knees of the God: and entreat him !
Urge him to grant his aid to the hostile ranks of the Trojans ;
So that, Achaia's hosts, dying fast by the brink of the ocean,
Under their prows may learn to rejoice, as they may, in their great King.

[s] Son of Saturn :—a title of Zeus ; the same as Cronides.

So may Atrides' self, their wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
Curse that folly which dared to dishonor the bravest Achaian."

Tears suffusing her cheeks, to the chief spake Thetis in answer.

"Why did I bear thee, my son?—or why, having borne, did I rear thee[t]?
Surely thy little life in thy ships, without tears, without sorrow,
Might have been lived in peace; since fate is so quickly to claim thee!
Doom'd to a death premature, more than all doom'd in life to affliction,
Thine is a hapless fate;—to a destiny sad have I borne thee!
Yet will I urge this suit, on the snow-crowned peaks of Olympus[u],
Unto the Thunderer, Zeus:—and perchance he will hear my entreaty.
Only do thou, O my son, stay here by thy swift-sailing galleys;
Nourish thy hate to Achaia; refrain altogether from battle.
Unto Oceanus[x], Zeus, 'mid the blameless Æthiop people,
Yesterday went to a feast, and the rest of the Deities with him[y].
Upon the twelfth morn thence he will surely return to Olympus:
Then will I go unto Zeus, in his glittering dome will I seek him;
Cling to the knees[z] of the God, and methinks he will grant my petition."

Thus did the Goddess speak; and she left her son still in his anger,
Grieved to his inmost soul for the fair-form'd maid who had left him;
Left him, parted by force.—Meanwhile did the subtle Odysseus
Make for the port of Chrysa, with hecatombs vowed to Apollo.
Soon they arrived at the port,—at the port so deep in its soundings;
Furl'd up the sails, and stow'd them away in the hold of the galley:
Down let the mast to the crutch—down quickly by aid of the halyards;
Deftly directed the ship by the oars to the place of the moorage;

[t] It is said that Thetis, from a maternal regard to their future destiny, had refused to rear any of her children except Achilles.
[u] This is the Asiatic, not the European Olympus.
[x] Probably the Indian Ocean.
[y] See 1 Kings, ch. 18, v. 27, "Or he is on a journey:"
[z] The usual form of supplication.

Forth then casting the anchors, they moor'd it fast by the halsers:
Forth from the deck came the crew, where the sea-waves broke on the shingle;
Forth came the victims doom'd to the shrine of the archer Apollo;
Forth came the maid Chrysèis;—in joy from the hold of the galley.
Soon, to the shrine of the God, was she led by the subtle Odysseus;
Who, to the hands of her father, restored her:—and thus he address'd him.

"Chryses, I here am sent by the King of men, Agamemnon,
Both to restore thee thy child, and to Phœbus offer atonement;
E'en for the Danaan host;—thus appeasing the wrath of the monarch,
Who on the Argive ranks has sent down weeping and wailing."

Speaking, he gave to her father his child; and he joyfully took her.
Hastily then they brought full hecatombs, meet for the great God,
Unto his well-built altar, and ranged them in order before it.
Washing their hands, they waved salt cake o'er the heads of the victims.
Then pray'd Chryses aloud, with hands raised high to the heavens.

"Thou of the silver bow!—Thou that art the protector of Chrysa!
Guardest Cilla divine, over Tenedos mightily rulest!
E'en as when first I invoked thee thou heardest the prayer of thy servant,
Honor awarded to him, heavy doom to the sons of Achaia;
So now, hear him again! hear the voice of thy servant's petition!
Take from the Danaan army the plague thou'st sent to destroy them!"

Earnestly pray'd his priest: and the prayer reach'd Phœbus Apollo.
Then when the prayers were pray'd[a], and the salt cakes cast on the victims,
Stretching their necks to the full, they smote, and slaughter'd, and flay'd them.
Sever'd the thighs for the God, and wrapp'd caul carefully round them,
Wrapp'd it in double folds; and placed choice morsels upon it.
Then did he kindle the fagots, and pour rich wine on the off'ring:

[a] This is one of the most exact accounts extant of the ancient sacrifices.

Ready, with five-prong'd forks, were the servants standing around him.
So, when the thighs were consumed, and the inwards, too, had been tasted,
All of the rest of the victim they cut into morsels and spitted;
Dress'd it with careful skill; and removed when the broil was completed:
And, when the food was cook'd, and they ceased from the toil, having finish'd,
Down to the feast they sat; nor did any lack ample refreshment.
And, when for food and for drink they had sated the appetite in them,
Servants replenish'd the bowls with the sparkling juice of the dark-grape;
Filling the cups for all, in due order and seemly succession.
All the day long in songs to the God did the sons of Achaia,
Seeking his favor again, chant Pæans[b] loudly before him:
Seeking the grace of the archer-God;—and he heard and relented.
Now the sun sank 'neath the sea; and twilight gather'd upon them;
All laid down to repose, 'mid the halsers, close by the galley.
Soon came the prime of the day—early Dawn, with her fingers-of-roses—
Then did they weigh, and depart, to the host of the sons of Achaia.
Right in the wake of the bark was a fresh breeze sent by Apollo:
Up went the mast high aloft, and the white sail flutter'd afore it:
Fill'd out the sail in the breeze;—and loud 'neath the stem of the galley
Rippled the blue sea-wave; as the bark got her way full upon her,
Springing from surge to surge, and cleaving a path thro' the waters.
Soon as it came to the shore, to the wide-spread hosts of Achaia,
Over the solid beach did they drag up the galley, and place her
High on the sands, and her sides prop up with the lengthy supporters:
Then went each on his way, to his own tent-door or his galley.

Still did the mighty Pelides, the swift-footed chieftain, Achilleus,
Nourish his wrath, sitting idly apart by his swift-sailing galleys.
Nor to the council he went,—where the eloquent speaker is honor'd,—
Nor did he go to the war.—But his heart it was pining within him,
Pining with rest—and he yearn'd for the war, and the shout of the onset.

[b] Hymns in honour of Apollo.

Now had the time pass'd on ; and the twelfth fair morn was advancing,
When to Olympus again, did the Gods, who endure unto all time,
Come, with Zeus at their head ;—all the Gods. Nor was Thetis forgetful
Of the request of her son ; but she sprang from the wave of the ocean ;
Rose, as the mist of the morn, to the sky and the top of Olympus.
Cronïdes there did she find,—all apart from the rest of the great Gods,—
E'en on the loftiest peak of the deep-cloven crest of Olympus.
Lowly the Goddess knelt ; and his knees clasp'd tight with her left hand,
Laying her right on the beard and the awful chin of the monarch[c],
E'en of the mighty Cronïon :—and suppliant, thus she address'd him.

" O Father Zeus, if ever, in strife with the Gods, has availed thee,
Act or word of mine, for once grant this my petition !
Honor award to my son !—upon whom comes, soonest of all men,
Fate premature :—upon him has the King of men, Agamemnon,
Foul dishonor imposed,—has seized his prize and retains her.
Only do thou, O Zeus, O Olympian, grant to him honor !
Victory grant unto Troy,—until all of the sons of Achaia
Honor my son as of old :—ay, more, and advance him in honor !"

Thus did the Goddess speak :—but the cloud-compeller replied not.
Long did he silent sit :—but Thetis again in entreaty
Clung, as if grown, to the knees of the God—and again she assail'd him.

" Give me thy promise, Zeus !—and thy nod too, add, to confirm it !
Or say no !—as thou pleasest—for fear cannot cause a refusal—
So shall I understand and be fully persuaded, that no one
Less is esteem'd than myself, amid all of the race of Immortals."

Grieved in his heart, at last, spake the cloud-compeller in answer.

" Hard is, indeed, the task :—and thy prayer brings quarrels with Hère ;
Hère, wont as of old to revile me with bitter invective.

[c] The ancient form of supplication.

E'en as it is she still, amid all of the conclave of Heaven,
Taunts me, and says it is I that assist yon Trojans in battle.
Go thou away then at once ;—lest Hère chance to perceive thee :
Know that thy prayer is heard ; and my care shall be still to perform it.
Lo if a sign thou seekest, the nod of my head may convince thee ;
No sign greater than this amid all of the race of Immortals :
Never is that recall'd, no deceit can avert its fulfilment,
Never does that come to nought, which the nod of my head has affirmèd."

Thus did the Thunderer speak ;—and his dark brows bow'd, as assenting.—
Waved, as he solemnly bent, the ambrosial locks of the great King,
On his immortal head : and his nod shook mighty Olympus[d].

Such the discourse of the two, and they hastily parted : and Thetis
Shot from the shining Olympus again to the depths of the salt sea ;
Zeus to his palace return'd ;—and the Gods uprose as he entered ;—
All uprose from their seats, as the Father enter'd among them :
None dared keep in his place, but all uprose to receive him.
Then sat he down on his throne.—But already had Hère discover'd
How with Zeus had consulted in secret council the Goddess,
She whose feet are as silver, the child of the ancient of Ocean.
And to Cronïon, thus did she speak with her taunting invectives.

" Who is it now of the Gods who is sharing thy councils, deceiver?
Ever is it thy joy,—I myself put aside and neglected,—
Still to perform those schemes thy mind has invented in secret :
Not one word do I hear amid all that thy soul has proposèd."

Then to her thus, in reply, spake the Father of Gods and of mortals.

" Hope not to search out thus all the deep resolves of my bosom ;
Spouse as thou art of mine, they are yet too hard for thy knowledge.

[d] The idea of the Olympian Jove of Phidias is said to have been derived from these three lines. The assent given to the prayer of Thetis is evidently an unwilling assent.

What it behoves thee to know thou shalt know soon as the time comes ;
No one of Gods or men shall e'er be enlighten'd before thee[e].
But what apart from the Gods I devise by myself, for the future,
Question me not upon that, nor meddle with what is above thee."

Answer'd again, to the God, thus the broad-eyed beautiful Hère.

"Cronides, sternest of Gods, what an ill-devised speech thou hast uttered!—
Heretofore nought have I question'd, nor meddled with what is above me.
Thou by thyself hast schem'd whatsoever thy heart has devisèd.
But I am now much afraid thou art being seduced by the Goddess,
She whose feet are as silver, the child of the ancient of Ocean.
She, as the mist of the morning, has clung to thy knees in entreaty :
Much do I fear, that thy nod has assented to honor Achilleus :
Honoring him, in the deaths of a host of the sons of Achaia."

Then, in reply to the taunt, spake Zeus, great whirler-of-storm-clouds.

" Fertile still of surmise, no action of mine can escape thee.
Yet thou wilt not succeed :—from my confidence further than ever
Further yet wilt thou stand ;—which perchance will gall thee the deeper.
Nor if it do, unto me will thine anger be cause of displeasure.
Sit then in silence down, and attend to the words I have utter'd :
Lest, if thou move me to wrath, not the whole of the Gods of Olympus,
All combined, may avail to release this grasp, if I clutch thee."

Thus spake the God :—and afraid was the broad-eyed beautiful Hère ;
Silent she sat ; with her breast scarce restraining the swell of her passion.
Sore in the dome of Zeus, were the Gods distress'd at the contest.
Then to appease such strife did Hephæstus, notable artist,
Speak to them, soothing the mind of his mother, the white-arm'd Goddess.

[e] And accordingly the whole of the Divine scheme is communicated to Hère in Il. xv.

"Grievous in sooth it is, unendurable longer the evil,
That, for the sake of mortals, ye two thus wrangle together;
Breaking the peace of the Gods, disturbing their ease and enjoyment;
Spoiling the zest of the feast, when thus giving way to your tempers.
But to my mother I say,—and she knows I am speaking the hard truth,—
E'en let her yield to my father, to Zeus, and assuage his displeasure:
Lest he continue to chide, and destroy all the joy of the banquet:
For my Olympian father could well, if he wish'd, overcome us;
Dashing us all from our seats—so much is he strongest in heaven.
Speak to him then, mother dear!—and entreat him with words of endearment:
So may the chief of Olympus again be propitious and love us."

Speaking, he fill'd up the cup, with its twofold hollow; and bore it
Unto his mother dear, and presented it, and thus address'd her.

"Comfort thyself, mother mine; and restrain thyself;—though with a full heart.
Lest, all dear as thou art, with these very eyes, I behold thee
Come to the worst in the strife; and, grieved to the soul, be unable
Or to avert thy doom, or to render availing assistance.
No slight task is it, mother, to strive with the King of Olympus.
Once did he seize me before, in his rage, when I tried to assist thee:
Seized by the foot, and flung me right over the threshold of Heaven.
All the day long I fell, till the sun was below the horizon[f]:
Then in the Lemnian Isle, came I down—little breath was within me.
There did the Sintians find, and they pitied the case of, the fallen."

Thus did he speak; and a smile lit the face of the white-armèd Hère.
Smiling, she took in her hand the cup from her son, from Hephæstus.
Then from right unto left, unto all of the Gods in their order,

[f] "and, with the setting sun,
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star."
Par. Lost, I., v. 742.

Bare he the wine, forth-pouring the nectar sweet from the goblet.
Loud and incessant the mirth of the Gods, of the happy Immortals,
E'en at the sight of Hephæstus, thus puffing along at the banquet[g].

Thus thro' the livelong day, till the Sun sank down to his setting,
Feasted the Gods upon high ;—nor did any lack ample refreshment.
Lack'd not the sound of the lyre, for the master of music, Apollo,
Stood with the Muses, responsive in song and harmonious numbers.

But when the burning orb of the Sun sank again to his setting,
Wearied and ready for rest went each God apart to his dwelling,
Each to his beautiful home ; to the home which the artist Hephæstus,
Lame as he was, had framed ; the design of his subtle invention.
And to his couch went Zeus, the Olympian, Lord of the Thunder.
E'en to the couch that he sought, when sleep came sweetly upon him :
There lay he down to repose ; and the golden-thron'd Hère beside him.

[g] At lame Vulcan thus assuming the office of Hebe or Ganymede :—or at his address to Hère.

BOOK THE SECOND.

Treats of the spectre Oneiros—the Council—and list of the navy.

All night long did the Gods, and the crested chiefs of the people,
Sleep:—but the eyes of Zeus knew nought of the sweetness of slumber.
Much did he ponder in heart how best to give fame to Achilleus:
How by the side of the galleys to slay many sons of Achaia.
This then, at last, to the God seem'd soundest device;—to Atrides,
E'en to the King Agamemnon, to send a false spectre, Oneiros[a].
Quickly he summon'd the vision; and rapidly thus he address'd it.

"Hence with thee, baneful Oneiros:—hence to the ships of Achaia!
Seek there the tent of Atrides,—the tent of the King Agamemnon!
Carefully say to the chief all this that I utter and tell thee.
Bid him to arm for fight all the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia:
All her assembled hosts:—for to-day shall he capture the stronghold;
Even Troy herself:—for the Gods, who inhabit Olympus,
E'en the immortal Gods, have assented, and bow'd in accordance
Unto the prayer of Hère:—and woe is in store for the Trojans."

Thus did he speak;—and the spectre departed, as ended the mandate.
Swiftly it went to the ships—to the swift-sailing ships of Achaia:
Went to Atrides' tent—Agamemnon's tent—and it found him
Sleeping soundly within: for ambrosial slumber was on him.
Then stood the sprite at his head; in the shape of the offspring of Neleus,

[a] See the account of the lying spirit, sent to Ahab's prophets. 1 Kings, xxii, 20.

Even in Nestor's shape;—most honor'd by King Agamemnon.
Cloth'd in the form of the elder, thus whisper'd the spectre Oneiros.

"Son of a warlike father! O son of the chivalrous Atreus!
Sleep'st thou?—Slumber becomes not a leader renown'd in the council;
One with so weighty a charge; with so many to follow his leading.
Hear then the words of my mouth:—from Zeus come I here to address thee:
Zeus; who, distant afar, spends love and pity upon thee:
Bidding thee arm for the fight all the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia,
All her assembled hosts: for to-day thou shalt capture the stronghold;
Even Troy herself:—for the Gods, who inhabit Olympus,
E'en the immortal Gods, have assented, and bow'd in accordance
Unto the prayer of Hère;—and woe is in store for the Trojans;
Woe at the hand of Zeus.—But bear it in mind, and forget not!
Let not the words be forgotten when sleep has deserted thine eyelids!"

Thus did the vision speak:—and departed, and left him debating,
Pondering over that which the future sternly denied him:
Deeming, on that very morning, to capture the city of Priam.
Fool as he was!—Unaware of the toils which Zeus was designing;
Zeus—now ready to bring upon both hosts, Troy's and Achaia's,
Woes and groans in full, and the fierce contention of battle.
Straight he awoke;—with the voice of the God yet ringing around him;
Sat up erect from sleep; and, first, donn'd tunic of woollen;
New, and brilliant in texture:—and then threw a mantle around him;
Bound on his shining ankles the curious work of the sandals;
Over his shoulder suspended his broadsword, studded in silver;
Grasp'd in his hand his sceptre[b],—derived, of old, from his fathers.—
And, thus equipp'd, went forth to the ships of the sons of Achaia.

Now had the morning divine clomb the loftiest peak of Olympus;
Bearing its light to Zeus, and to all of the race of Immortals.

[b] See the history of it, *infrà*, v. 101.

Then did the King command that the heralds make proclamation,
Calling again to the council the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia.
Loudly the heralds proclaimed;—and the chiefs throng'd quick to the summons.
First at the ship of the King—of the Pylian monarch—of Nestor,—
Call'd he together the best and the sagest chiefs of the whole host:
Call'd them together, and thus he propounded a subtle suggestion.

"List to me, friends and chiefs!—'Mid ambrosial night did a vision
Stand by my side as I slept:—it appear'd in the semblance of Nestor:—
Him both in shape, and size, and mien did it chiefly resemble.
Close by my head did it stand; and with these words it address'd me.
'Son of a warlike father! O son of the chivalrous Atreus!
Sleep'st thou?—Slumber becomes not a leader renown'd in the council;
One with so weighty a charge, with so many to follow his leading.
Hear then the words that I speak;—from Zeus come I here to address thee:—
Zeus, who, distant afar, spends love and pity upon thee.
Bidding thee arm for fight all the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia;
All her assembled hosts:—for to-day shalt thou capture the stronghold,
Even Troy herself:—for the Gods who inhabit Olympus,
E'en the immortal Gods, have assented, and bow'd in accordance,
Unto the prayer of Hère;—and woe is in store for the Trojans;
Woe at the hand of Zeus:—so bear it in mind, and forget not!'
Thus spake the form, and fled: and slumber deserted mine eyelids.
Then let us arm, if we can, this day all the sons of Achaia!
But let me first address, and try, if I can, to persuade them:
Try by designing words to induce them to fly in the galleys;
You, as you each may be able, oppose it, and keep them together."

Thus spake the King, and sat; and then amid all the assemblage,
Rose up Nestor, the King of the sandy region of Pylos.
Deeply concerned for the weal of the people, he rose and address'd them.

"Friends,—who the Argives lead into battle, and guide in the council!—
If such a dream as this had appear'd to another Achaian,
False had we held his tale, or had lightly regarded the vision:
But now the vision is his;—he who boasts him the first in the whole host!
Then, let us arm, as we may, for the battle the sons of Achaia."

Thus spake the sage, and rose—and departed at once from the Council.
And to the words of his mouth conform'd all chiefs of the people,
All of the sceptred Kings:—and the hosts came streaming behind them.

E'en as the clustering tribes of the bees[c], in motion incessant,
Passing in endless swarms, to and fro, at the mouth of a crevice,
Close by their nest in the rock, to and fro settle thick on the flowers,
Settle, and leave them again, flying over them hither and thither;
So, did the manifold tribes of the host, from the tents and the galleys,
Over the broad sea-shore, in countless throngs to the muster,
Crowd; rank closing on rank:—and Fame, bright-shining among them,
E'en as if sent from Zeus, drove them on; and they thickly assembled.
Backward and forward the multitude sway'd—great the crush, and the tumult!—
Earth shook under their feet!—Then heralds made proclamation,—
Nine at once proclaim'd,—that the hosts keep silence among them:
Silence;—to hear what is said when the high-born princes address them.—
Quickly the hosts obey'd;—form'd ranks,—and were seated in order;
Silenced at once was the clangor;—and then did the King Agamemnon,
Rise up, grasping his sceptre;—his sceptre the work of Hephæstus;
Given by him unto Zeus, as an ensign fitting a monarch.
Then Zeus gave it away unto Hermes, slayer of Argus:
Hermes gave it again unto Pelops, driver of war-steeds:

[c] The similitude is threefold: viz., the multitudinous host is expressed by the swarming of bees; its egression from the ships in a continued troop by the bees pouring out of the rock; and its dispersion over the shore by their settling upon the flowers.—TROLLOPE.

Pelops gave it in turn unto Atreus, shepherd of people;
Atreus dying, bequeath'd it in turn to the wealthy Thyestes;
And from Thyestes it reach'd Agamemnon:—last in succession:
Sign of sway, as it was, over Argos, and numerous islands.
Leaning on this, thus the monarch now spoke to the hosts of the Argives.

"[d]Friends! brave servants of Arès!—ye Danaan chieftains and heroes!
Zeus has, in truth, imposed on your monarch a grievous deception.
Perverse God!—for he promised—and e'en by a nod he affirm'd it—
Promised the sack of Troy, and a safe return to our homesteads.
Cruel the fraud he proposes.—For now he commands me, to Argos
Back to return, without glory; for thinn'd are the ranks of my people.
This may be pleasing to Zeus, who in might is the greatest of all Gods.
Many, the crested cities his anger has sunk to destruction;
Many, it yet will sink, for his might will be ever the greatest.
Yet, were it foul reproach, for unborn generations to hear it,
Hear, that a nation so great, as is that of the sons of Achaia,
Bootless return'd back home, from the war and the strife of the battle,
'Gainst an unequal foe;—for the war is a failure at present.
Say that, in solemn treaty, the sons of Troy and Achaia,
Slew their victims in peace, and quietly number'd the people,
Even the sons of Troy, all native-born in the city;
And we, the sons of Achaia, in tens sat us down to the banquet,
Seeking for every decad a Trojan to hand us a goblet,
Many a decad then would be seated, and lack an attendant.
So much in numbers, I say, do we here—we, the sons of Achaia,—
Beat Troy's home-born sons.—But the foreign aids of the Trojan,
Thronging from numerous cities, the allied ranks of her spearmen,
These are the great preventives:—and bring my purpose to nothing:
Staying the sack of Troy—of that well-inhabited fortress.
Nine long years have pass'd:—nine years by the will of the Highest:

[d] Agamemnon, in this address to the troops, endeavours to incite them to battle, while in terms suggesting their abandonment of the war. His apparent, and not his real meaning, is the first to produce an effect upon the army.

Rotten the planks of the ships, and slack is the rigging upon them;
All by themselves our wives and our little children await us,
Sitting alone at home in our desolate walls:—but the great work,
That which we came to perform, is remaining, as yet, unaccomplish'd.
List then to what I advise, and let all of us yield unto reason!—
Let us be launching the ships! let us flee to the land of our fathers!
Troy, with her wide-built streets,—we are not as yet destined to take them."

Thus did he speak: and he sway'd all the minds of the people as one man;
Even of those who knew not the scheme that the King had concerted.
Heaved up at once the assembly: as long waves heave on the ocean,
In the Icarian gulf, when raised by the blast of a strong-wind,
Eurus or Notus, blowing from clouds collected by great Zeus.
As when a strong west-wind over corn-fields heavy for harvest,
Sweeps; and the yielding ears sink in uniform motion before it;
Sway'd thus all the assembly: and straight, with shouting and uproar,
Down to the ships they rush'd; and in clouds 'mid the feet of the army,
Rose up the trampled dust: and each exhorted his neighbor,
Urging to handle the ships, and to launch on the face of the ocean.
Some clear'd ways for the launch: and the shouts of the homeward-returning
Rose to the very sky; some loosen'd the props of the galleys.
Then, in despite of fate, had the Argives fled to their own land;
Had not Hère sought, and thus spake to Pallas Athène.

"And is it thus, O child of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder!
Thus shall the Argive hosts, back again to the land of their fathers,
Fly, thus inglorious, home, o'er the wide expanse of the ocean?
Leaving behind, as a boast, to the sons of Troy, and of Priam,
Argive Helen? for whom have so many, alas! of Achaia,
Died on the plains of Troy, far away from the land of their fathers?
Go then, astute as thou art, seek the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia;
Sound in the ear of each thine own mild words of persuasion!
Let them not launch on the waters the well-bank'd sides of the galleys."

Thus did she speak ; and her words moved the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.
Down from the peaks of Olympus, in haste shot the form of the Goddess,
Quickly she came to the ships, to the swift-sailing ships of Achaia ;
There—not Zeus himself more astute in the council,—Odysseus
Standing in silence she found :—but the long dark sides of his galley
Not yet a hand had touch'd ; for grieved was the soul of the chieftain.
Standing near to him, thus spake the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.

" High-born son of Laertes, O much-contriving Odysseus !
And are ye thus once again to the much-loved land of your fathers,
Flying inglorious back in the well-bank'd sides of your galleys ?
Leaving behind as a boast to the sons of Troy and of Priam,
Argive Helen, for whom have so many, alas ! of Achaia,
Died on the plains of Troy—far away from the land of their fathers ?
Seek the Achaian hosts ;—tarry not, but this instant address them !
Sound in the ears of each thine own mild words of persuasion !
Let them not launch on the water the well-bank'd sides of the galleys."

Thus did she speak ; and well did the chief know the voice of the Goddess.
Eager he started to go ; and first his encumbering mantle
Doff'd : and he gave it in charge to Eurybates—trusty attendant.
Soon was he face unto face with Atreus' son, Agamemnon ;
Took his paternal sceptre[e]—an ensign abiding for all time—
And, thus arm'd, he arrived at the ships of the mailèd Achaians.

Then, whensoever he met any king, any notable leader,
Standing close to his side, with persuasive words he address'd him.

" Surely a chief, such as thou, should not show fear like a coward !
Sit in repose thyself ;—and quiet the people around thee !
Thou art as yet unacquainted with all the design of Atrides.
Now he but tests—full soon he perchance may chastise the Achaians.
All of us heard not the words of the King,—what he spake in the council.

[e] In order to show that he had authority to reassemble the meeting.

Only beware that he work not some ill to the sons of Achaia!
Dreadful the wrath of a king:—of a monarch descended from great Zeus!
Honor is his from above: and Zeus is his friend and defender."

But when he met any man of the herd—full of shouting and tumult,—
Him did he smite with the sceptre, and menaced and sharply reproved him.

"Wretch as thou art! sit at peace,—sit and hear what is said by thy betters;
Betters, they well may be, of so weak and unwarlike a dastard:
Nameless alike 'mid the brave in the field and the wise in the council.
Think not that all of Achaia can here play the part of a despot!
Save us from numerous Lords!—One Lord is enough for a people!
One king alone, who rules, deriving his rights and his sceptre,
Even from mighty Cronion:—prerogatives fitting a monarch."

Thus did he marshal the host with the sway of a prince;—the assembly
Rolling in tumult back from the tents and the sides of the galleys:
Rush'd, with a heavy sound:—like the sound of a turbulent ocean,
Raking a shingly beach:—when the deep re-echoes the thunder.

Then were the rest composed:—and again took places in silence.
One man alone, clamor'd loud in unseemly contention:—Thersites!
Cursed with a flow of words, ever speaking, but ne'er to the purpose;
Sneering, and ever prompt to contend with the kings of the people:
Prompt to suggest low causes of mirth to the sons of Achaia,
Mirth at the kings.—But himself was the vilest of all who assembled
Under the walls of Troy.—He was lame of one foot; and he squinted:
Crook'd his shoulders, and drawn o'er his chest in a knot; and above them
Peer'd up his peakèd head, with a soft down sprinkled upon it.
Hateful was he above all to Achilles, and also Odysseus:
Usually carping at them:—but now was the great Agamemnon
Bearing the brunt of his shrill-toned tongue:—while the sons of Achaia,
Listen'd with scorn to the wretch—and with deep indignation and anger,—

As, at the height of his voice, he the King thus heap'd with invectives.

" What is there wrong, O Atrides?—What now is thy cause of repining?—
Full are thy tents of brass :—in their shade many beautiful women :—
Women, selected for thee, and by us the stout sons of Achaia :
Choicest prizes of all from the spoils of the towns we have taken!—
Or is it gold that is wanted :—again to replenish thy coffers?
Brought by some Trojan chief, for his son ;—as the price of his ransom ;—
Captive perchance to myself, or to some other lord of Achaia?—
Or is it more to thy taste, to retain as thy partner in pleasure,
Some fair captive apart?—Yet bethink thee!—a leader among us,
Should not, for such light cause, be aggrieving the sons of Achaia!——
Slaves!—Words of scorn as ye are!—Weak daughters, not sons, of Achaia!
Homeward!—Be off in the ships!—and leave this fellow behind us!
Leave him alone, to enjoy all the plunder his prowess will yield him ;
Here, on the shores of Troy ;—and teach him to value his betters!
He, who the mighty Pelides,—a man far his better in battle,—
Dared to dishonor ;—and seized his prize for himself, and retains her.
Slow, in sooth, is the wrath of Achilles, and wanting in vigor,
'Were it not so, Atrides, thy pride had e'er this been abated[f].'"

Thus at the shepherd of tribes, Agamemnon, in noisy contention,
Spake Thersites :—quick at his side was the godlike Odysseus.
View'd him with scowling glance, and bitterly thus he reproved him.

" Babbler and fool as thou art,—with tongue ever skill'd in declaiming—
Hold thy peace, Thersites ; nor strive ever thus with the monarchs!
Mortal meaner than thou one vainly might seek to discover
'Mid all the hosts of Atrides, who leaguer the walls of the Trojan.
Ill it beseems such an one, 'gainst the kings to be ever declaiming ;
Heaping abuse on the chiefs, and urging the flight of the army.
Nor can we tell at the present what chances of war may await us ;
Whether success or shame be the fate of the sons of Achaia.

[f] This is a line from the speech of Achilles himself. Il. i, v. 230.

But, for this reason alone, Agamemnon, first of the people,
Sitting at ease, thou revilest;—from spleen, that the Danaan heroes
Proffer him honor and wealth:—this causes thy sneers and invectives.
But let me tell to thee this—and my threat shall be surely accomplish'd.
If I but find thee again, playing here thus the fool, as thou now art,
Then, let me not for a day carry longer my head on my shoulders,
Then let me pass by the name of Telemachus' father no longer,
If I refrain to lay hold of thee,—strip off the rags from thy carcass;—
Cloak, vest, all that thou wearest—and leave thee as bare as thy face is!
Whip thee right out of the Council, with stripes well earned, though unwelcome:
Sending thee weeping and whining, and whimpering off to thy galley."

Thus spake the chief, and the sceptre he brought down right on his shoulders;
Full on his back:—and he shrunk from the blow, and his eyes fill'd with water;
And on the wretch's skin, to the blow of the golden sceptre,
Rose up the blood-stain'd weals; and he sat himself down in a tremble,
Smarting, and looking the fool that he was:—and wiping his eyelids.—
Grieved as the Council were, they heartily laugh'd at his trouble.
And thus, man unto man, each open'd his mind to his neighbor.

"Many and good are the deeds that Odysseus has done for the army:
First as he is both to counsel the right, and to prove it in action.
But the far greatest good has he done to the Argives in crushing
Back this abusive wretch, and in stopping his taste for declaiming.
Not in a hurry again will the mind of the insolent railer
Send him to turn upon princes the points of his sneering invectives."

Thus spake the host at large:—but Odysseus, spoiler of cities,
Stood with the sceptre in hand; and beside him Pallas Athène,
Veil'd in a herald's form, by a sign kept the people in silence:
So that the nearest and farthest, alike, of the sons of Achaia,

Might understandingly hear, and ponder the words of the speaker :
While, much moved for the weal of the people, he spake and address'd them.

" King as thou art, O Atrides ! methinks that the sons of Achaia,
Wish thee to stand henceforth as a subject of scorn unto all men.
Leaving—as now they propose—those vows unfulfill'd, which they once vow'd—
—Here, as they throng'd to the war from Argos, famed for its chargers—
Ne'er to desist, ere captured and sack'd was the town of the Trojans.
Now, like to babes in arms, or to women deprived of their husbands,
Wailing the one to another, they moan to return to their own homes.
Not that the wish to return is a marvel, when men are in trouble :
For but a single month, if a man is detain'd from his own wife,
Not undisturb'd he remains, confined to the sides of his galley,
Caught by the stormy winds, or the strength of the turbulent Ocean.
Now 'tis the ninth long year, coming on in its slow revolution,
Finds us remaining here.—Little wonder the sons of Achaia
Pine 'mid the prows of the galleys !—But yet, not the less of dishonor,
Waits on a stay so protracted, and flight with no purpose effected.
Patience, I say, my friends !—Wait and see what the future will bring us !
Whether 'twas truth, or not, that of old was predicted by Calchas.
Well do we all recollect—for ye saw it, and all can affirm it,
All whom the fates have spared, in the plague which so recently thinn'd us,
E'en up to yester-eve—when at Aulis the ships of Achaia
Came, with their freight of woe, for the children of Troy and of Priam,
When at the sacred fountain, to all of the race of Immortals,
E'en as we paid our vows, with hecatombs, meet for their altars,
Under the plane-tree shade, by the brink of the sparkling water,
Came a portentous sign.—For a serpent of terrible aspect,
Streak'd on its back with red—the Olympian brought it to daylight—
Burst from the base of the shrine, and ascended the trunk of the plane-tree.
There, on the tree high up, for security perch'd on the top-branch,

Twitter'd a sparrow's brood; 'mid the foliage seeking concealment;
Eight were the half-fledged young, and the mother herself was the ninth bird.
Each of the twittering nestlings was helplessly gorged by the serpent;
And as the mother-sparrow—lamenting the fate of her offspring—
Flew too near, her also, he seized by the wing and devour'd her.
Then, when the mother-bird, and her nestlings alike he had eaten,
Fell a portentous fate on the snake from the God who had sent him.
Smitten by mighty Cronïon,—the snake stood stiffen'd to marble.
Sore—as we stood and gazed—did we marvel at all that was passing;
At such a fearful sign from the Gods while serving their altars.
Calchas the seer then utter'd the words of profound divination.
'Why are ye mute with wonder, ye fair-tress'd sons of Achaia?
Great is, in sooth, this sign which Zeus vouchsafes in his wisdom;
Late-given, late of fulfilment, its fame is for all generations.
E'en as the snake has eaten the unfledged young ones, in number
Eight, and the mother-bird was the ninth, who had foster'd the nestlings,
So, many years shall we, in the same place, spend in the contest;
But in the tenth, Troy's town, with her well-built streets, shall be captured.'
Thus did the prophet speak;—and his words now await a fulfilment;
Tarry then here yet awhile, all ye well-mail'd sons of Achaia!
Wait till, in fulness of time, we have captured the city of Priam!"

Thus did Odysseus speak; and the Argives shouted approval.
Quiver'd the very ships with the shouts of the sons of Achaia,
Giving their deep applause to the speech of the godlike Odysseus.
Then to the hosts spake thus the Gerènian chivalrous Nestor.

"Now by the Gods on high, ye are like little children in council!
Children, of minds immature; who know and care nothing of battle.
Where are the solemn oaths?—and the treaties solemnly sworn to?
Councils, and manly schemes?—and the plighted hands we relied on?
Pure libations, and all?—are the flames henceforth to contain them?
Vain the contention of words:—not in them any cure for the evil,

None can we find in them, though long be the season allotted.
Therefore do thou Agamemnon, thy purpose holding unshaken,
Lead on the Argive hosts this day to the heat of the battle.
Let them debate by themselves—to their ruin—those sons of Achaia,
One or two at the most, who are wishing,—the wish shall be frustrate,—
Homeward again to return :—ere the words of the Ægis-wielder
Yet unproved remain,—whether truth or an empty deception.
For I affirm that Cronïon his word gave,—solemnly gave it— 350
Promised the hosts success, on the day when the swift-sailing galleys,
Argives mann'd for the war, bearing death and fate to the Trojans ;
Then, on the right of the host, the auspicious lightning of heaven,
Shone, by command of the God.—Let none think of wandering homeward,
Ere on a Trojan spouse he has wreak'd, in the right of a victor,
Vengeance for Helen's loss, for her tears and unheeded entreaties[g].
Then if a man be among us, by love of his home overpower'd,
Let him be off at once, in the well-banked sides of his galleys,
So, as the first of the host, may he light on the fate he is shunning.
But take heed, O King !—consider and weigh the advice well !— 360
Not without reason of weight should the word that I speak be rejected :—
Marshal the armies by tribes, and also by clans, Agamemnon !
So shall tribe succor tribe, and clan succor clan in the onset.
Thus, if thou carry it out—by the aid of the sons of Achaia—
Easily mayst thou know whether people or leader be faulty.
Know who is valiant in fight, when the hosts are distinct in the battle :
Know—if thou failest to capture the city of Troy—whether failure,
Comes from the Gods, or is caused by the weakness or fault of thine own men."

Then to the hoary sage thus answer'd the King Agamemnon.

[g] The meaning of this line is rather doubtful : and it therefore seems proper to give Helen the benefit of the doubt ; and to hold that her actual flight from her country was involuntary : that the case, in fact, was one of forcible abduction. See Gladstone's Homer, vol. iii. p. 572, *et seq.*

"Best in the council thou, above all of the sons of Achaia!
Now, by the Father Zeus, by Athène's self, and Apollo,
Would that ten such as thou could be found in the host of Achaia;
Then, by Achaian hands, full soon, should the city of Priam,
Storm'd and sack'd, at last fall in irreversible ruin.
But I am jaded with troubles from Zeus, from the Ægis-wielder;
E'en by the wearisome weight of useless strife and contention.
I and Achilles have striven—and all for the sake of a damsel:—
Striven in wrathful words;—and I in my wrath the aggressor.
But if we ever agree—though short were the term of agreement,—
Shorter is Troy's reprieve from the doom that surely awaits her.
Hence then, each to his meal;—and then to the banquet of Arès!
Well let him sharpen his spear;—well fasten the orb of his buckler;—
Well let him heap up fodder to strengthen his thundering war-steeds:
Well let him scan his car, and himself make ready for battle:
So that, from morn till eve, we may strive in the strife of the valiant:
Strive, with no pause between, no weak cessation or breathing:
Strive, till the sacred night put an end to the noble contention!—
Damp, with the sweat of fight, on each warrior's breast, shall the shield-belt
Lie 'neath his shield;—and his hand cleave in weariness close to his weapon.
Dark, shall the steeds stand, sweating, in front of the radiant war-car.—
Then, if a dastard there be, whom skulking apart I discover,
Skulking afar from the war, 'mid the dark-curved beaks of the galleys,
Little his chance of escape from the maw of the dogs and the vultures."

Thus did the Monarch speak;—loud shouted the Argives;—the tumult
Rose, like the roar of the surf, when it beats on a bare-jutting sea-rock,—
Urged by the fierce south-wind,—on a rock ever wash'd by the waters,
Bluster the winds as they will, from each dark quarter of heaven.
Rising, they left their seats; and scatter'd apart, 'mid the galleys:
Lit in the tents their fires, and sat them down to refreshment.
Each for himself, invoked some one of the Gods, the Immortals;
Praying for safety in fight, from death, and the burden of Arès.

And unto Zeus himself did the King of men, Agamemnon,
Slaughter a stall-fed steer; full five years old was the victim.
And to the feast he invited the sagest and best of Achaia.
Nestor the first of all; then Idomeneus, King of the Cretans;
Then the two mighty Ajaces;—and next unto them Diomèdes;—
Then—not Zeus himself more astute in the council—Odysseus:
Last, uninvited[h], came the redoubtable chief Menelàus;
For—uninvited—he knew how sorely his brother was harass'd.
Circling the victim round, they laid on his forehead the salt-cake;
And thus, praying for all, spake the monarch, the King Agamemnon.

"Zeus, highest, greatest of all, enthronèd in clouds and in darkness!
Let not the sun go down, nor twilight hasten upon us,
Ere I have overthrown both the palace and city of Priam,
Laid in their ashes low; and have burnt up her gates in the fierce flame.
Torn from the breast of Hector the glittering mail of his corslet,
Stiffen'd with brazen scales;—while, around him, his haughty companions
Grovelling, prone in dust, at the red earth bite in the death-pang."

Such was the Monarch's prayer;—not granted, as yet, by Cronïon:
Though he accepted the victim, he doubled the toils of the slayer.
Then yet again they pray'd, and cast salt cakes on the victim;
Stretching his neck to the full, they smote and slaughter'd and flay'd him.
Sever'd the thighs for the Gods, and wrapp'd caul carefully round them;
Wrapp'd it in double folds, and placed choice morsels above it.
These to the God they burnt, with the well-dried wood of the offering;
Spitting the inward parts, exposed to the flame of Hephæstus:
So, when the thighs were consumed, and the inwards, too, had been tasted,
All of the rest of the victim they cut into morsels, and spitted;
Dress'd it, then, with skill; and removed when the broil was completed.
Then, when the food was cook'd, and they ceased from the toil, having finished,
Down to the feast they sat, nor did any lack ample refreshment:

[h] As knowing that he would be welcome.

And, when for food and drink they had sated the appetite in them,
First of them all, thus spake the Gerenian horseman Nestor.

"Atreus' glorious son, great King of men, Agamemnon!
Trifle no more in words!—No more let us linger from action:
Linger from that good work which the God himself has appointed.
Order the heralds, at once, to the brass-mail'd sons of Achaia,
Make proclamation;—the hosts to assemble in front of the galleys.
Then, 'mid Achaia's ranks, let us go in a body, and traverse
All the array, thus arousing their souls to the struggle of Arès."

Such were the words of the sage:—they incited the King Agamemnon.
And to the clear-voiced heralds he speedily gave his commandment,
Loudly to summon to battle the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia.
Quickly they made proclamation—and quickly the hosts were assembled.
They who encircled Atrides, the high-born Kings of the people,
Hasted to marshal the armies;—and with them the blue-eyed Athène,
Bearing the Ægis renown'd;—its orb ever bright and immortal.
Hung, from the buckler's edge, fair tassels a hundred in number;
Each was of twisted gold; each of oxen a hundred in value.
With it the Goddess went 'mid the whole of the host of Achaia,
Rousing them all to the strife; and implanting a vigor in each breast,
Urging again to take part in the fight and the tumult of battle.
Sweet, on a sudden, seems the lamentable war;—for the moment,
Sweeter than safe return in the ships to the land of their fathers.

As a devouring flame lays hold on the depths of a forest,
Crowning a mountain-peak;—and the blaze shines over the lowlands;
So, as the ranks moved on, from the brazen face of their armor,
Glinted the radiance back; and illumined the zenith of heaven.

And of the gathering hosts—as the thickening flights of the wild-fowl,
Cranes, or gray wild-geese, or swans with necks far-extended,
E'en on the Asian mead, by the wandering stream of Cäyster,

Now move here, now there, and rejoice in the strength of their pinions,
Now settle down with a cry, and the plain it re-echoes the tumult—
So did the manifold tribes of the hosts, from the tents and the galleys,
Pour on the plain of Scamander.—The firm earth sounded beneath them;
Sounded beneath both the feet of the men, and the hoofs of the war-steeds.
Thick they stood in ranks on the flowery plain of Scamander;
Thick, as the leaves of the trees, or the blossoms that bloom in the spring-time.

And as the teasing swarms of the flies come thronging incessant,
Thronging and buzzing around, in spring, 'mid the pens and the sheep-folds;
Even in early spring, when the first milk foams in the milk-pails;
So, to the strife with Troy, did the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia,
Swarm on the battle-plain;—eager all to break out to the onset.

But the impatient hosts—as the goat-herds easily sever
Their own charges apart, when they roam intermix'd on a mountain—
All the high chiefs of the people were marshalling, ready for battle;
Moving, now here, now there.—In the midst was the King Agamemnon;
Bearing his eyes and head like Zeus,—great lord of the lightning;—
Ares-like in his waist,[1] in the breadth of his chest like Poseidon.

And as a stately bull, supreme in a herd over others,
Stands as the first confest, and lord of the cattle around him;
So was Atrides by Zeus that day put first and the foremost;
Best and boldest of all, and the chief of an army of heroes.

Tell me, ye Muses! now,—ye who dwell in the homes of Olympus!
Tell me—(for *ye* are divine; ever-present, and conscious of all things,
While *we* trust to report, knowing nought as of perfect assurance)—
Who were the Danaan leaders, the princes, and chiefs of the people?—
Nor could I number the throng, or recount all that army of heroes,
Not if, in place of one, ten tongues, ten mouths were allow'd me;

[1] That is, compact and small in the waist.

Not if my voice never fail'd; and my heart were as brass in my bosom; 490
If ye, the daughters divine of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder,
Fail to suggest the names of the chiefs who came thronging to battle.

List then!—And hear while I sing what the ships were, and who the commanders[k]!

Leitus, Peneleus too, Prothoènor and Arcesilàus,
Clonius join'd with them, led Bœotia's sons to the battle:
Those who at Hyria dwelt, on the rock-piled summits of Aulis;
Schoenus, Scolus too, and thy mountain-slopes, Eteònus!
Thespia, Graia too, and thy wide-spread plain, Mycalessus!
Harma's scatter'd tribes, and Eilesius' tribes, and Erethræ's;
Eleon's warlike sons, those of Peteon too, and of Hyle; 500
And Ocalèa too, and of Medeon's well-built fortress;
Còpe, and smooth Eutrèsis, and Thisbe, famous for wild-doves;
All Chæronèa's sons, and thine, grass-green Haliartus!
Those who guarded Platæa, and those who inhabited Glisas;
Those who guarded the wall of the well-built fort Hypothèbe;
Sacred Orchestus too, by the far-famed grove of Poseidon;
Arnè, famed for her vines; and Nisà, home for Immortals;
Those who Medeia held, and, farthest in distance, Anthèdon:
Fifty their long black ships;—and to war, on the deck of each galley,
Went of Bœotia's youths one hundred and twenty in number. 510

They who Asplèdon held, and Orchomenus of Minyæa,
March'd under Arès' issue, Ascalaphus brave, and Ialmen;
Whom the fair Astyochè—in the mansion of Actor Azỳdes—
Bashful maid as she was,—in an uppermost room of the palace—
Bore to the stalwart God, who had wedded the maiden in secret.
Thirty the hollow ships that carried the troops o'er the ocean.

Schædius, Iphitus' son, and his brother Epistrophus,—sprung from

[k] For an elaborate dissertation upon the Catalogue, see Gladstone's Homer.

Nanbŏlus, gallant prince—led Phocis' ranks to the battle.
Those who held Cyparissus, the rock-piled summit of Python;
Daulis, and fair Panopèus, and Crissa, home for Immortals;
Scatter'd tribes that abode near Hyampolis, Anemorèa,
And on the fertile banks of the sacred stream of Cephisus;
Or in Lilæa dwelt, where the fair stream gushes in fountains.
Forty the black-ribb'd ships which brought these tribes to the combat.
All stood marshall'd alike under Phocian chiefs in the muster;
And on Bœotia's left their ranks stood arm'd in the battle.

Chief of the Locrian troops was the rapid Oïlean Ajax:
Ajax the less;—not a chief like the great Telamonian Ajax;—
Far less in stature he;—linen-mail'd[l], and skill'd with the jav'lin;
Skill'd above all the Hellènes, and all of the sons of Achaia.
Under him, Cynus' ranks, and Calliarus', march'd to the battle;
Opus' and Scarphè's troops, and Bessa's too, and Augeia's;
Tarphè's, Thronius' too; both close by the stream of Boàgrus;
Forty the ships that carried his Locrian troops to the muster;
Locrian tribes;—not holding Eubœa! but placed on the mainland.

Those who retain'd in Eubœa,—the battle-breathing Abantes—
Chalcis, and fair Eretreia, thy vine-clad hills, Histiæa!
Dium's towering fort, and the sea-wash'd wall of Cerinthus;
Styra chose as their dwelling; or guarded the wall of Carystus;
These led the offspring of Arès, the notable chief Elephènor;
Son of Chalcòdon—leader of all the high-minded Abantes.
On came the martial Abantes, their dark locks gather'd behind them;
Warriors, eager for fight;—whose long spears levell'd in battle,[m]

[l] Specimens of mail, made from fibres of different kinds, as worn by savage tribes at the present day, may be seen in most museums. Quilted cotton is commonly used as armor in Asia.

[m] This is mentioned as a peculiarity: the spear in ordinary use being a missile, although not unfrequently used to stab. The distinction between a wound inflicted at a distance, and one given in a hand-to-hand encounter, is generally disregarded in Pope's translation.

Shatter'd the coats of mail that girded the breasts of the foemen.
Forty the black-ribb'd ships that follow'd the chief to the muster.

They who guarded the wall of Athène's well-built fortress—
State of Erectheus, once—of the great-hearted chief, whom Athène
Nursed, fair daughter of Zeus, though the food-giving earth had produced him,
Placed by her there in her shrine—in the wealthy shrine of her temple—
Where the Athenian youth, as the years in their swift revolutions
Roll'd along, honor'd the Goddess with blood of bulls and of sucklings,—
These to the fight were led by Peteus' son—by Menestheus.
Nor was his equal found, amid all who on earth have their dwelling,
Skill'd, as he was, to marshal in fight both the cars and the spearmen.
Nestor alone in this—as befitted his years—was his rival.
Fifty the long black ships that follow'd the chief to the muster.

Salamis twelve black ships to the war sent:—over them, Ajax
Ranged his serried ranks by the martial Athenian levies[n].

They who inhabited Argos, and Tiryns famed for her ramparts,
Dwelt, in the deep-bosom'd bay, at Hermione, and at Asine,
Træzen, Eïone too, and thy vine-clad hills, Epidaurus!
All of Achaia's youths who at Mases dwelt, and Ægina;
These to the war were led by the valorous chief Diomèdes.
Sthenelus second to him, stout son of the famed Capanèus.
Next unto him in command came Euryalus, like the Immortals;
Son of the royal Mecisteus, son of the mighty Talàus.
But over all supreme was the notable chief Diomèdes.
Eighty the ships that carried his warlike troops to the muster.

All of the tribes that guarded the well-built wall of Mycenæ,
Corinth, famed for wealth, and the well-built wall of Cleònæ;

[n] Upon the authority of these two lines Salamis is said to have been awarded to Athens, in a contest between that city and Megæra. The second line is however suspected to have been forged for the occasion.

Those who Oneia held, and Aræthræ famed for its beauty,
Sicyon's dwellers too—first realm of the kingly Adrastus,—
Fair Hpperesia's sons, and thine, rock-piled Gonoessa!
Those who Pellène held, or dwelt in the district of Ægе,
Scatter'd tribes of the coast, who at Helice dwelt—these Atrides
Led in a hundred galleys—the wide-ruling King Agamemnon!
His, among all of the hosts, were the most, and the best, and the bravest.
Sheath'd in his glittering mail, much elate was the breast of the monarch,
Knowing himself to be first 'mid so mighty an army of heroes;
First in his own proved might; and first in the strength of his people.

They who held for their homes thy hollow vale, Lacedæmon!
Pharis and Sparta too, and Messè, famous for wild-doves,
They who Bryseiæ held, and the beautiful vale of Augeia,
They who Amỳclæ held, and the sea-wash'd fortress of Helon,
Guarded the Laan wall, or by Œtylus guided their homesteads,
These, came in threescore ships,—but apart from the ships of the monarch—
Under his brother's rule, the redoubtable chief Menelàus.
He, amid all of the hosts, self-reliant, and eager for battle,
Urged all alike to the war—for his soul was all eager for vengeance,
Vengeance for Helen's loss[o], for her groans, and unheeded entreaties.

They who in Pylos dwelt, in the beautiful plain of Arène,
Thryum, hard by the ford of Alphèus, the city of Œpus,
At Cyparissus dwelt, and the dwellers at Amphigeneia,
Pteleos, Helos fair, and at Dorium too—(where the Muses
Thamyris seized of Thrace, and silenced the lays of the poet,
Meeting him, coming along from Œchalian Eurytus, homewards;
For he had boasted that he would be victor in song, though as rivals
Even the Muses sang, fair daughters of Zeus;—so, his eyesight,
First, at his pride incensed, did the Goddesses take; then despoil'd him
Of his poetic art, and untaught him the gifts of the lyre)—
These all follow'd to fight the Gerènian horseman Nestor:

[o] See note, *suprà*, v. 356.

Ninety the long black ships that carried his troops to the muster.

They of Arcadian race, who dwelt by the mount of Cyllène,
Æpytus! hard by thy tomb;—men train'd and accustom'd to close fight—
They who at Pheneus dwelt, and Orchomenus rich with its sheepfolds,
Ripè, and Stratia too, and the breezy heights of Enispè,
They who Tegea held, and thy beautiful plain, Mantinæà!
Those who Parrhæsia held, and those who had homes at Stymphèlus,
Follow'd the son of Ancæus, the notable chief Agapènor;
Carried in threescore barks; full thick on the decks of the galleys
Throng'd the Arcadian troops, stout warriors train'd to the combat.
But the great chieftain Atrides, the king of men, Agamemnon,
Furnish'd the ships himself[p]; and they travers'd the blue of the ocean
Thus by his aid: themselves unaccustom'd to naval employments.

They who Buprasium held, and inhabited beautiful Elis,
E'en from Hyrmìne's wall, and from Myrsĭnus, placed at the land's end,
Up to Olènia's rock, and the end of Aleisium's borders,
Came under chieftains four;—and under the guidance of each chief,
Came ten swift-sailing ships, each throng'd with the troops of Epeia.
Ten with Amphimachus came, and with Thalpius ten, to the battle;
Cteatus' issue, the one; and the other, the offspring of Actor:
Ten by thy son, Amarynces! the valorous leader Diores;
And the fourth ten were led by Polyxenus, like the Immortals:
Offspring was he of Agasthenes, son of the princely Augèas.

They who beyond the seas right facing the region of Elis,
Dwelt at Dulichium's isle, and the famed Echinadian islands,—
Sacred soil—to the war follow'd Mèges, rival of Āres.
Son of a man dear to Zeus—he was born to the horseman Phyleus;
Who to Dulichium fled, when his father[q] was anger'd against him.

[p] According to Thucydides it was this superiority in his navy which gave Agamemnon the command of the Confederates.

[q] Augeas.

Forty the long black ships that carried his troops to the muster.

They of the high-soul'd race who inhabited Cephalonèa,
Ithaca's dwellers too, those of Neritus shaking its forests,
They too who held Crocyleia, and Ægilips, mountainous region,
Samos' scatter'd tribes, and the dwellers at distant Zacynthus,
All of the tribes who dwelt on the shore of the opposite mainland,
Follow'd Odysseus' lead: Zeus himself not astuter in council.
Twelve ships follow'd the chief—vermilion-prow'd—to the muster.

Thoas, the son of Andræmon, Ætolia led to the battle:
Those who at Pleuron dwelt, and at Olenus, and at Pylène,
Chalcis, hard by the coast, and the rough Calydonian valley.
Lost was the Œnean race,—the magnanimous leader was childless—
Gone was the chief himself—dead the auburn-hair'd Meleager:
And of Ætolia's sons was Thoas now the commander.
Forty the long black ships that sail'd under him to the muster.

Leading the sons of Crete, came Idomeneus, famed as a spearman.
Those who in Gnossus dwelt, and in Gortyn famed for her ramparts,
Lyctus, Milètus too, and the chalky cliffs of Lycastus,
Rhetium, thriving town, and the populous city of Phæstus.—
All of the rest who inhabited Crete, of the hundred cities:
These were all led to the war by Idomeneus, famed as a spearman.
Next unto him in command was Meriones, rival to Àres.
Eighty the black-ribb'd galleys that follow'd the king to the muster.

Stalwart, and mighty in stature, Tlepolemus, son of Heràcles,
Carried, in nine long ships, his haughty Rhodian levies,
Far from the isle of Rhodes—into districts triple divided:
Lindus, Jelyssus too, and the glittering soil of Cameiros.
All these follow'd to battle Tlepolemus, famed as a spearman.
Whom the fair Astyochèa had borne to the mighty Heràcles,
Led away captive by him from her home on the banks of Sellèis,

From her Ephyrian home ;—from the spoil and the sack of the cities.
Scarcely to man's estate had Tlepolemus grown in the palace,
When, by mischance, did he slay a relation—old was the victim—
Dear to the house of his father,—Licymnius, offspring of Àres.
Soon he equipp'd his ship, and with many to follow his leading,
Fled on the open seas :—for fierce were the threats of his kinsmen :
E'en of the sons, and the sons of the sons, of the mighty Heràcles.
Wandering over the seas,—many perils endured in the journey—
Came they at last unto Rhodes :—there settled in triple division ;
Loved as they were of Zeus,—great ruler of Gods as of mortals.
And upon them, in abundance, was wealth pour'd down by Cronïon.

Nereus brought three ships from Sỳme's wall to the muster.
Nereus, issue of Charŏpus, and of the lovely Aglèa.
Nereus, fairest in form of the Danai, gather'd to combat,
Under the walls of Troy—Pelides only excepted.
Yet was he weak in war—and few men follow'd his leading.

Those who at Casus dwelt, and at Crapathus too, and Nisyrus,
Cos,—where Eurypylus[r] dwelt—and the men of the isles of Calydnæ,
These did Pheidippus brave, and Antiphus lead to the battle :
Thessalus' sons were the twins—himself of the blood of Heràcles.
Thirty the hollow ships that follow'd the chiefs to the muster.

They too—as many as dwelt in the bounds of Pelasgian Argos,
Alus, Alòpe too, or who lived in the borders of Trechis,
They who in Phthia dwelt, and in Hellas, of beautiful women—
Myrmidons all of these, and Hellénes call'd, and Achaians—
These in fifty ships came to war 'neath the care of Achilleus.
Mindful were they, no more, of the hoarse-sounding voice of the battle :
Leaderless now they remain'd :—none marshall'd their ranks for the onset.
Fast in his galleys abided the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus,

[r] Not the leader of the name subsequently mentioned ; but a son of Neptune, killed by Heràcles.

Wroth in his heart at the loss of the fair-hair'd damsel Brisèis;
Whom, from Lyrnessus sack'd, he had chosen as prize of his prowess;
E'en when he storm'd Lyrnessus, and captured the rampart of Thebæ;
Mynes striking to earth, and Epistrophus skill'd in the jav'lin;
Sons were the warriors, both, of Evènus, Selepius' offspring.
Grieving for her he abided:—but nigh was his time for arousing.

Those who Phylace held, and—a region beloved by Demèter—
Pyrasus, flowery land, and Itòne cover'd with sheepfolds,
Antron, hard by the sea, and Pteleon deep in its pastures,
These—while the warrior lived—did the warrior Protesilàus
Marshal for fight;—but the dark earth cover'd the limbs of the hero.
Rending her cheeks at his loss, yet in Phylace sorrow'd his consort;
There was his half-built house.—He was stricken to death by a Dardan,
E'en as he leap'd to the land,—far the first of the sons of Achaia.
Much was he mourn'd by his army—yet leaderless long they remain'd not—
For were they led to the fight by Podarces, offspring of Àres;
Iphiclus' gallant issue, the wealthy descendant of Phylax.
Brother was he in blood to the high-soul'd Protesilàus:
Brother, but younger in age;—for first, both in prowess and birthright,
Protesilàus stood;—so his troops were supplied with a leader,
Though he himself was slain, and they mourn'd him as men for a hero.
Forty the long black ships that carried his troops to the muster.

Those who at Pheræ dwelt, by the banks of the lake Bœbèis,
Bœbæ, Glaphyræ too, and the well-built city, Ioleus,
These did Admètus' son lead in galleys eleven to battle:
Son of Admètus, Eumèlus,—his son by the fairest of women,
Even Alcestis' self—most beautiful daughter of Pelias.

Those who Methonè held, and Thaumacia too, and the dwellers
In Melibœa's wall, and the mountain-tract of Olìzon,
These, to the battle, were led by the archer-chief, Philoctètes.
Seven his ships:—five times ten men were embark'd upon each ship;

Not only skill'd in the oars, but train'd to the craft of an archer.
Helpless the chieftain abided :—in grievous affliction and anguish,
Left in the Lemnian island, alone, by the sons of Achaia,
Wounded, and nigh unto death, by the bite of a venomous hydra.
There he remain'd in his woe :—but his fate will ere long be remember'd ;
Soon will the Argives think yet again of the prince Philoctètes.
Nor, though they yearn'd for their chief, were his levies in want of a leader ;
Medon, the bastard son of Oïleus, led them to battle ;
Rhènè's son, whom she bare to Oïleus, waster-of-cities.

Tricca's warlike sons, and the men of the swelling Ithòme,
And who Œchalia held, fair city of Eurytus, gather'd
Under the noted guidance of chieftains famous as surgeons :
Sons of the healing God :—Podalirius named, and Machàon.
Thirty the hollow ships that carried the troops to the muster.

Those who Ormenius held, by the crystal fount Hypereia,
Those who Asterium held, and Titanum's glittering summits,
These did Eurypylus lead—the redoubtable son of Evæmon.
Forty the long black ships that carried his men to the muster.

They who Larissà held, and the scatter'd tribes of Gyrtòne,
Orthe, Helòne too,—and the white-built town Oloessa,
These to the battle were led by the martial chief Polypætes ;
Son of the mighty Peirithous, offspring of Zeus the Immortal ;
(Unto Peirithous borne by the far-famed Hippodameia ;
On that day when he drove out the shaggy tribes of the mountains,
Unto the rude Æthìkes, away from the Pelion forests.)
Nor was the chief sole leader : Leonteus, offspring of Àres,
Stood by his side—he was offspring of Ceneus, son of Coròn us.
Forty the long black ships that carried their men to the muster.

Goneus led to the war ships two and twenty from Cyphos ;
With him the Enièn es ; and, eager for fight, the Peræbi ;

They who their homes have fix'd in the storm-cleft cliffs of Dodona,
Who by thy pleasant banks, Titaresius! labor in harvest:
Stream which to Peneus runs with the flood of its clear-flowing waters;
Nor does it intermix, nor sully his silvery eddies;
But, on the top of his waves, flows separate, even as oil flows;
Branch, as it is, of the Styx, of the dread oath sworn by the great Gods.

Prothous led in arms Magnesia's levies to battle,
Mighty Tenthredon's son;—and beneath him, marshall'd in order,
Those who at Peneus dwelt, and at Pelion shaking his forests.
Forty the long black ships that carried his men to the muster.

Such were the Danaan leaders;—the princes, and chiefs of the people.
Say then, Divine Muse! say what chief was the bravest among them?
Whose were the fleetest steeds, amid all in the train of Atrides?
Fleetest and best of all were the steeds of the son of Pherètes,
Steeds that Eumèlus drove;—swift-footed, as wing of the wild-fowl:
Match'd in color and age, and equal in height by the plumb-line;
Mares of Pièrian race; war-bred by the archer Apollo,
Him of the silver bow;—fear follow'd their hoofs in the battle.
Bravest of all of the chiefs was the great Telamonian Ajax,
During Achilleus' wrath.—For no one mated Achilleus;
No steeds rivall'd the chargers that carried the mighty Pelides.
But he, apart from the rest, in the hold of his sea-cleaving galley,
Nourish'd his wrath at the king, Agamemnon, shepherd of people,
Even at Atreus' son.—His troops on the beach of the ocean
Loiter'd away their time with quoits, and in hurling the jav'lin;
Or in the use of the bow: and the steeds, tether'd each by his war-car,
Browsed at will on the lotus, and parsley loving the marshes.
All cover'd up with care lay the battle-cars of the princes,
Each in his tent;—and the troops, unled, and in want of a leader,
Wander'd about, now here, now there; nor had part in the battle.

Now moved the armies along; and the plain blazed, as it were burning.

Earth groan'd under their feet;—as when the great Lord of the lightning
Strikes, incensed, on the earth, surrounding the form of Typhæus;
'Mid the Arimian hills; where they say, is the couch of the giant.
So, to the feet of the hosts, advancing in order together,
Sounded the solid earth;—and the battle-field lessened before them.

Then to the sons of Troy came the swift-footed messenger Iris,
Sent with a message of woe from Zeus, from the Ægis-wielder.
All were in council met; at the gates of the palace of Priam;
Crowded together closely; the youth of the land and its elders.
Standing near to the throng, spake the swift-footed messenger Iris;
Spake in the borrow'd voice of Priam's son, of Polites;
Who, as a scout for Troy, well trusting his speed in the foot-race,
Sat on the highest point of the tomb of the old Esyètes;
Watching the first egress, from the ships, of the sons of Achaia.
Like unto him, in form, and in voice, spake the swift-footed Iris.

"Dear to thee, father, still are the multiplied words of the speaker;
Dear as in time of peace.—But war unavoidable presses.
Many a time and oft have I mix'd in the strife of the valiant;
But any host so martial, and sumless, as yet I have seen not.
Count up the sands of the sea, or the leaves waving green in the forest!
Such and so many the hosts that move to the storm of the rampart.
Hector, I charge thee first—and hear my words and obey them:
Many the hosts allied to bring aid to the city of Priam;
Scatter'd in race and clime, their tongues are unknown to each other:
Therefore, let each in command take charge in the fight of his own men;
Moving to war at the head of his own attendants and liegemen."

Thus did she speak,—and Hector distinguish'd the voice of the Goddess.
Quickly dissolved the assembly;—all hurried to arms in an instant.
Open the gates were flung; and the hosts pour'd forth on the wide plain;
Footmen, and battle-cars;—and loud was the roar of the tumult.

Right in the front of the walls is a steep mound—facing the city ;
Lofty, apart on the plain ; yet on all sides easily mounted[3].
Called by men Batiœa—but unto the race of Immortals
Known as the ancient tomb of the nimble-limb'd Myrìne.
There stood, marshall'd apart, Troy's sons and the aids of the Trojan.

Hector, the son of Priam, was leader-in-chief of the armies ;
Known by his glancing helm.—And around him, eager for battle,
Throng'd Troy's best and her bravest :—the cuirass'd ranks of her spearmen.

Chief of the Dardan aids was Ænèas, son of Anchises ;
Born on the slopes of Ide ; of the Goddess, the queen Aphrodìte.
Gallant son of the loves of a Goddess wed to a mortal.
Join'd in command with him was Archelochus, son of Antènor ;
Acamas too ; brave brothers, and both inured to the combat.

All of the wealthy tribes who, low on the ridges of Ida,
Dwelt in Zeleia's wall, and drank the dark stream of Æsèpus,—
Trojans in blood—were led by the notable son of Lycaon ;
Pandarus :—skill'd in the bow, and arm'd by the hand of Apollo.

Those who Adraste held, and who came from the realm of Apœsus,
Those who Pyteia held, and the crag-piled summit of Tère,
These did Adrastus marshal, and Amphius cuirass'd in linen,
Children of Merops, the seer, of Percòte ;—a seer, above all men
Blest with prophetic vision ;—and much had he warn'd and dissuaded
Both his sons from the ravenous war ;—but they heard and obey'd not ;
Scorning their father's voice ;—for fate led them onward to perish.

Those who Percòte held, and Practium—those who inhabit
Sestos, Abydos too, and the beautiful town of Arisba,
Asius led to the war, son of Hyrtacus, ruler of nations :

[3] Or, having roads all round it.

Asius, Hyrtacus' son; whose bright bay fiery war-steeds
Brought him from verdant Arisba, and banks of the river Selèis.

Then did Hippothous marshal the famous Pelasgian spearmen;
Warriors, turning the glebe of the fertile plain of Larissa:
He was their chief; with him was Pylæus, offspring of Arès;
Sons of Teutamus' son, of the mighty Pelasgian Lethus.

Acamas, Peiros too, led to battle the Thracian armies,
All whom Hellespont bounds with the strong clear stream of its waters.

Next did Euphèmus marshal the mighty Ciconian spearmen;
Son of the chief Trezænus, the high-born offspring of Ceas.

Next, to the battle, Pyræchmes the skilful Pæonian archers
Led, from far Amydon, and from Axius, devious river;
Axius, fairest stream among all upon earth that meander.

All the Enetian race, Paphlagonia's valorous levies,—
Famous for mules—were led by Pylæmenes, notable warrior:
They who abode at Cytòrus;—at Sesamus tended their homesteads;
Owning lofty abodes by the famous Parthenian river;
Cromna, Ægialus too, and the fair Erythìnian highlands.

Hodius, join'd in command with Epistrophus, led from a distance,
Stout Halizonian levies, from Alybè, teeming with silver.

Mysia, Chromis led, and Ennomus, notable augur.
Little however avail'd him his augur's skill in the battle;
Little his fate was averted.—He died by the hand of Achilleus;
Died in the river-bed; 'mid the slaughter'd crowd of the Trojans.

Phorcys led to the war, with Ascanius, like an Immortal,
Phrygia's martial sons,—from Ascania—eager for battle.

Antiphus, Mesthles too, led the valiant Mæonian levies.
Sons of Tælèmenes they, by the Water-Goddess Gygæa.
Leaders were they of the tribes who dwell by the mountain of Tmolus.

Nastes led to the battle the Carians, foreign in language;
Those who Milètus held, and the leaf-crown'd mountain of Phthiræ;
Dwelt by Mæander's streams, and by Mycale's prominent summits.
These by Amphimachus led, and by Nastes, march'd to the combat.
Brother-chiefs, and known as Nomion's illustrious offspring:
He who to battle went bedizen'd with gold, as a maiden;
Fool as he was!—small avail was his splendor to parry the death-stroke.
Under the hand of Pelides he died in the bed of the river;
All his array of gold was seized on as spoil by Achilleus.

Lycia's troops were led by Sarpedon;—aided by Glaucus;
Far from the Lycian land, and the banks of the eddying Xanthus[t].

[t] It will be observed throughout the poem that chiefs, not mentioned in the Catalogue, were constantly arriving in aid of the Trojans. Among whom may be noticed in particular Asteropæus, who in the assault of the Argive entrenchments commanded a division along with Sarpedon and Glaucus; and Rhesus, the Thracian; slain by Diomed and Ulysses in their night adventure.

BOOK THE THIRD.

Shows how her consorts twain met in single combat for Helen.

THUS, as the two great hosts, by the leaders, were marshall'd in order,
On, with a clang and shout, swept Troy's array :—as the wild-fowl[a].
Such is the clang of cranes, high aloft, in the centre of heaven ;
Fleeing the winter's storm, and pitiless blast of the rain-cloud ;
Moving in ranks, high aloft, crying loud o'er the stream of the ocean ;
To the Pygmæan race[b] bearing slaughter and heavy destruction ;
Bearing, from distant climates, the fierce contention of battle.
Onward, in silence deep, moved the battle-breathing Achaians ;
Each man sternly resolved to sustain his friends in the combat.

As when the Southern wind rolls mist o'er the peaks of a mountain[c] ;
Hateful indeed to the swain, by the thief better loved than the midnight ;
Dense gloom deepens around, and a man can but see for a stone's-throw ;—
So, 'mid the feet of the hosts, rose the dust in a smothering whirlwind ;
Onward as still they press'd ;—and the battle-field narrow'd between them.

Then, as the foremost ranks drew near and more near to the onset,
Right in the van of Troy, 'mid the skirmishers, came Alesander[d] :

[a] The aptness of the simile will be recognised by those who have watched the flight of long lines of wild fowl in severe weather.

[b] It seems doubtful who are here alluded to. Probably some tribe of African monkeys.

[c] Homer was evidently a mountaineer—a member probably of some primeval Alpine Club. The simile supposes the reader to be upon the high pastures of a mountain ; not down in the fields, as in Pope's translation.

[d] Called indiscriminately, Alexander or Paris—the former has been softened into Alesander when required by the metre.

Fair in form as a God;—with a panther's hide on his shoulder;
Bended bow, and sword;—and thus, with two glittering jav'lins
Brandish'd, he dared to the fight all the bravest and best of Achaia:—
Dared them to meet him alone, face to face, in the mortal encounter.

But when the eager eye of the Arès-loved Menelaus
Fell on him, thus pressing on in the van, striding proudly to battle,
E'en with the joy of a lion that bounds on the neck of the quarry,
—Some great mountain-goat, or antler'd stag of the forest—
Eager with hunger, and tears it to earth, and devours the carcass,
Spite of the baying hounds and the threatening shouts of the hunters;—
So, at the sight of his foe, of the godlike chief, Alesander,
Bounded the heart of Atrides—expecting to slay the offender.
Fierce, as a lion, he leap'd to the earth in his arms from his war-car.

Him, 'mid the foremost ranks, when the godlike chief, Alesander,
Saw, pressing forward to fight,—on his heart fell fear and a trembling:
Deep, 'mid the troop of his friends, he retreated, avoiding the death-stroke.
As, in a mountain-glade, when a man, treading nigh to a serpent,
Shrinks, in sudden dread, and his limbs all tremble beneath him,
Backward he starts dismay'd, and a pallor comes over his visage;
So, back again to the throng of the valorous chiefs of the Trojans,
Shrank, from Atrides' face, Paris, beautiful as an Immortal.

Hector remark'd his flight, and bitterly thus he addressed him[e].
"Fair in form as thou art,—woman-mad, and seducer of woman,—
Would thou hadst ne'er been born, or died ere arriving at wedlock!
Better, by far, had it been—better far for thyself—to have perish'd,
Rather than thus have lived, as a scandal and shame to thy kindred.
Think of the scornful taunts of the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia!
Praising the gallant looks of the champion famed for his beauty;
But for his beauty alone;—all wanting in prowess and courage.

[e] This speech may be remarked as the first by Hector in the Iliad. In it he at once assumes a position of antagonism towards Paris which is preserved throughout the poem.

Pray, was it thus, thus endow'd, that once, roving over the ocean,
Thus, in thy wandering galleys, with suitable comrades to aid thee,
Roving to distant climes, thou hast stolen the spouse of another?
E'en from the Apian land—fair spouse of the mighty in battle?
Woe and grief to thy father, thy city, and all who abide there!
Unto thy foemen joy; to thyself but a shame and abasement!—
Dar'st thou not meet in the battle the Arès-loved Menelaus?
Surely 'twere well to have tried what a man thou hast robb'd of his consort!
Little would then have avail'd thee the gifts of the Queen Aphrodìte:
Lyre, and well-dress'd hair, and beauty, when roll'd in the red dust.
Shame to the sons of Troy!—too timorous grown; or the people
Had, with a coat of stones, recompensed thee for numberless evils."

Then, in reply to the prince, spake the godlike chief, Alesander.
"Hector, thy taunts are deserved;—not a word goes further than justice.
Thine heart ever is true. As the temper'd axe of the woodman,
Cleaving a solid beam, which he shapes for the frame of a galley;
And from the edge of the axe his arm gains strength, as he wields it;
So, in thy gallant breast, is the mind ever keen and enduring.
Yet, do not urge as crimes, these gifts of the Queen Aphrodìte.
Never should man despise any gifts of the Gods unto mortals!
Glorious, free-will gifts! no human device can ensure them.
But if it please thee now that I peril the venture of battle,
Make them in peace sit down,—all the armies of Troy and Achaia!
Then, in the central space, let myself and the stern Menelàus,
Meet, and contend for Helen, and all of the plunder'd possessions.
Whichever quells his foe, and proves to be stronger in battle,
His be the lady to hold; and the wealth, let him take and enjoy it.
While all the rest of the armies, in peace and in treaties united,
Ye, of Troy, repossess her fertile plains; and the Argives
Visit their steeds once more, and the beautiful dames of Achaia."

Thus did he speak; and the heart of Hector leap'd as he heard him.
Soon, in the central space, did he check the advance of the Trojans;

Grasping his weapon athwart[f]:—and the van fell back at the signal.
Still, at the warrior's head did the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Level with eager aim the flights of the stones and the arrows.
But, with a voice heard afar, spake the king of men, Agamemnon.

"Argives, back from the fight! stay your weapons, ye youths of Achaia!
He, of the glancing helm, would address us; the warrior Hector."

Thus spake the King;—and they paused from the fight, and suspended the onset.
Then,—all silence around—spake Hector to both of the armies.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy, and ye well-mail'd[g] ranks of Achaia!
Hear Alexander's words—his words who was cause of the contest!
How he proposes, that all,—both Troy's brave sons and Achaia's,—
Lay, on the fertile earth, their glittering armor beside them;
While, in the midst, himself, and the Arès-loved Menelaus,
Fight, all alone, for Helen, and all of the plunder'd possessions.
Whichever quells his foe, and proves to be stronger in battle,
His be the lady to hold, and the treasures to take and enjoy them!
While all the rest of the hosts live in peace and in faithful alliance."

Thus did the Trojan speak—deep silence fell on his hearers;
Till in reply, spake out the redoubtable chief, Menelaus.

"Hear me! I too must speak!—Grieve ye all, as ye may, for the contest,
No grief equals mine!—But I trust that a term has arrivèd,
Parting Troy and Achaia.—Already enough have ye suffer'd;
Suffer'd in feud of mine, and for Paris, the cause of the contest.
Which of the twain he be, whom death and fate are expecting,

[f] In which position it could be clearly seen that he was not about to use it offensively.

[g] The expression "well-greaved" may, if preferred, be substituted here and elsewhere as a more literal rendering. But probably the special reference to the greaves is only intended to denote the completeness of the panoply.

His be the doom !—and the rest of ye all part in speed and in safety !
Therefore, do ye of Troy bring hither a white and a black lamb ;
Due to the Earth and Sun :—for Zeus, we furnish another.
And let himself be here, even Priam, to witness the treaties ;
—(All his sons we esteem overweening[h], and ill to be trusted)—
So, that the truce, sworn to Zeus, may escape from the risk of transgression.——
Like to themselves, will the minds of the young be for wavering ever :
But the man stricken in years, calls the past to the aid of the future ;
Takes in one view the twain ; and arrives at a loyal decision."

Thus did he speak : and joy seized on all both of Troy and Achaia ;
Deeming a term arrived unto war and the woes that attend it.
Backward they drew their steeds, into line ; and abandon'd the war-cars ;
Put off their heavy armor, and laid it on earth close beside them,
Near to each other : and small was the space that divided the armies.

Hector, without delay, two heralds sent to the city,
Both to procure two lambs, and to summon the King to the treaties.
And to the fleet was Talthybius sent by the King Agamemnon ;
E'en to the hollow ships, for a third lamb fit for a victim ;
Even a lamb for Zeus :—and he went as the monarch commanded.

Then to the white-arm'd Helen, from high, came the messenger Iris[i] ;
Came in the form of her sister-in-law ; whom the son of Antenor
Own'd as his wife ; the brave son of Antenor, the prince Helikàon :
Fair, above all of her sisters ; Laòdice, daughter of Priam.
There, in the palace, she found the princess ; and her work was before her :
Double-textured, in purple :—and many a battle she wrought there,
Fought by the sons of Troy, and Achaians gleaming in armor,

[h] Even Hector himself sometimes justifies the first part of this accusation; see his address to Polydamas in Il. xii.

[i] Semble, from Zeus.

All on account of her—toils brought by the hands of the War-God.
Standing beside her, close, spake the swift-footed messenger Iris.

"Come, dear lady!—Behold what great deeds now are in action!
Troy's chivalrous sons and Achaians gleaming in armor—
They, who an instant before, drew nearer and nearer together,
Eager for naught but war, and the mournful onset of Àres,—
Now sit in silence down:—and the war it is calm'd in an instant.
All on their bucklers recline, their long spears standing[k] beside them;
While Alexander's self, and the Àres-loved Menelaus,
Wielding their pointed spears, are about to do battle to win thee.
Vanquish whichever may, henceforth thou art spouse of the victor."

Thus did the Goddess speak:—and she brought back the old recollections;
All sweet thoughts of her former spouse, of her home, and her parents.
Robed at once in white, in a veil hanging down to her ankles,
Eager she rush'd from her chamber, the tears running over her eyelids.
And not alone did she go: but with her, two trusty attendants;
Clymene, beautiful-eyed; and Æthrœ, daughter of Pitheus.
Soon did the three arrive at the Scæan gates of the city.
Priam—the King—sat there; with Panthus, and with Thymætes;
Lampus; Clytius, too; Hiketàon[l], offspring of Àres;
And, both noted for wisdom, Ucalegon sage, and Antènor.
There did the elders sit; in the Scæan gates of the city[m].
Past was their day of war:—but their voices were heard in the Council,
Mellow'd with age:—as the note of the Cicadæ[n], singing incessant;
Singing, perch'd on the boughs, with a sweet but tremulous music.
So Troy's ancient chiefs sat, basking a-top of the town-wall:

[k] Fastened into the earth by the spike at the lower end of the spear:—with which Abner slew Asahel.

[l] Lampus, Clytius, and Hiketàon—brothers of Priam. See the genealogy of the royal house in Il. xx, v. 236, &c.

[m] The Scæan gates were those which opened to the plain of Scamander, and commanded a view of the fleet and battle-field.

[n] The tree-crickets: which sing in the trees in warm climates.

And as they look'd on the form of the lady approaching the rampart,
Thus, in accents quick, spake the elders one to the other.

"Small is the marvel, sooth, that the sons of Troy and Achaia
For such a woman as this do so long endure evils on evils!
See! how she moves along! fair, stately, and like to a Goddess!
Yet, all fair as she is, let her safe depart hence in the galleys,
Rather than tarry, and be the destruction of us, and our offspring!"

Such were the elders' words:—but the King spake, calling to Helen°.
"Come, dear child, come hither, and sit down safely beside me!
Look, if thou wilt, on the husband, and kindred, and friends of thy girlhood.
Blameless art thou in my sight:—all the blame is on them, the Immortals:
They, in sooth, have caused me this grievous war with Achaia.
Sit thou here;—and tell me the name of yon powerful leader;
Yonder Achaian there:—stout champion, stalwart in figure!
Others, perchance, there may be by the head who surpass him in stature:
But so resplendent a man—mine eyes never yet have beheld one,
One so worthy of honor.—He looks and he moves like a monarch!"

Then to the King, in reply, spake Helen, fairest of women.
"Justly dear as thou art, my shame, my respect wait upon thee.
Better, by far, had I died,—by a shameful death had I perish'd,—
Ere I had left, with thy son, my bridal couch, and my kindred,
Infant, and only child; and the troops of my young companions!
But fate would have it so; and I wail and bemoan it for ever.—
But to give answer to that which thou seekest to know, and hast ask'd me,—
Yonder chief is Atrides:—the wide-ruling King Agamemnon:

° The manner in which Helen is spoken of here, and throughout the Homeric poems, is totally inconsistent with the supposition that she was a great criminal. Everything seems to point to originally mere indiscretion; leading against her will to lamentable results, and expiated by the deepest penitence and self-abasement.

Excellent both as a king on the throne, and a soldier in battle[p] !
Once, alas, hapless wretch as I am, I address'd him as brother."

Thus did she speak :—and the old man answered in deep admiration.
" Fortunate monarch ! Atrides !—How blest !—How happily-fated[q] !
Wide are indeed thy rule, and sway o'er the sons of Achaia !
Once did I journey, myself, unto Phrygia, famed for its vineyards :
Many were there of the sons of the land ; men with fleet-footed chargers ;
Otreus' troops, and the soldiers of Mygdon like to Immortals.
Sangar's banks beheld how throng'd was the camp of the levies.
I was myself in arms ; and pass'd for a soldier among them ;
E'en at the time when they fought with the Amazons ; women, but menlike.
But not the like were there of these dark-eyed sons of Achaia !"

Thus spake the elder again, as his eye chanced light on Odysseus.
" Tell me my daughter again, who is this whom now I am noting ?
Less is he, e'en by the head, than Atreus' son, Agamemnon ;
But he excels that king in breadth of chest and of shoulders.
Piled on the fertile earth is his glittering armor beside him :
While he himself, as a ram, moves scanning the ranks of his people ;
Like to a full-fleeced ram ;—naught else is more perfectly like him—
Ranging amid the flock of the white ewes herding around him."

Then did the daughter of Zeus speak thus in reply to the monarch.
" That is the son of Laertes :—the much-suggestive Odysseus.
Ithaca boasts his birth. Though the isle be but barren and rugged,
Skill'd is the chieftain in crafty device, and in provident counsel."

[p] This line was considered by Alexander the Great to express the perfection of a prince.

[q] This eulogy of the happiness of Agamemnon must be read with the recollection that within a few months after it had been pronounced he had apparently filled up the measure of his prosperity by the conquest of Troy, and had then died on his own threshold, murdered by the hand of his wife's paramour.

Even as Helen ceased, spake the wise Antènor in answer.
"O lady[r], nought is more close to the mark than the word thou hast spoken!
Here, unto this very town, on a time came the godlike Odysseus:—
Came on account of thee[s]—with the Ares-loved Menelaus.
I entertain'd both chiefs: in my palace as friends I received them:
Learn'd to esteem the great talent of both, and their provident counsels.
And when they came to consult with the sons of Troy in assembly,
Both when erect, Menelaus excell'd in the breadth of his shoulders;
Both sitting down, you would say the more dignified man was Odysseus.
And as they came to speak, and to reason with men in the council,
When Menelaus spoke, it was clearness all, and conciseness;
Few were his words; but each word clearly heard; he was no long debater;
No word miss'd its point: though in age of the two he was younger.
But when it came to the turn of the much-suggestive Odysseus;—
Standing, and looking down, and fixing his eyes on the pavement,
Tightly he grasp'd his sceptre,—nor backward nor forward he sway'd it—
Held it, motionless all, as a man with no knowledge of speaking;
All the appearance of one dumb with passion or 'reft of his senses;
But when the deep soft voice broke at last from the depth of his bosom—
Words coming frequent, fast, and soft as the flakes of the snow-storm—
Not with Odysseus then might vie any one among mortals;
Nought, as we drank his words, did we care what he was in appearance."

Ajax, third of the host, mark'd the monarch, and questioned the lady.
"Who then is yonder Achaian?—stout champion, mighty in stature?
Topping the chieftains around by his head and the depth of his shoulders?"

[r] It is worthy of remark that, although in the royal presence, Antenor addresses himself directly to Helen, instead of to the King.

[s] To treat for her restoration. It appears (*infrà*, Il. xi.) that on this occasion a proposal was made and entertained to murder the two ambassadors.

Then did again, in reply, speak Helen, fairest of women.
"Ajax the great is he—mighty bulwark of all the Achaians!—
There, on the other side, is Idomeneus, circled by Cretans,
Standing, firm as a God;—Crete's leaders clustering round him.
Often the prince was the guest of the Arès-loved Menelaus,
In what once was my home, when he journey'd from Crete to the mainland.
More, many more, do I see, of the dark-eyed sons of Achaia;
Chieftains whom I have known, and could number by name and in order;
Yet are there two I discern not, 'mid all of the heads of the people;
Castor, tamer of steeds; Polydeixes[t], famed for the cestus!
Brothers are they of mine; whole-brothers; one mother hath borne us.
Either they came not here, from thy beautiful vale, Lacedæmon!
Or, if they follow'd the war, in the sea-tracking sides of their galleys,
Now they abandon the field, and secede from the strife of the valiant;
All unable to bear the disgrace and shame that attend me."

Thus did she speak: but the life-giving Earth held the forms of her brothers;
Deep in thy vale, Lacedæmon! the much-loved land of their fathers.

Now did the heralds bring from the town all to hallow the treaty:
Even the lambs, and the wine,—heart-cheering gift of the vineyard,—
Held in a goat-skin flask: and then did the herald Idæus,
Bearing a glittering goblet and golden cups to the monarch,
Standing alone by his side, thus rouse up the elder to action.

"Son of Laomedon, rise!—For of thee it is ask'd by the leaders—
Trojans, tamers of steeds, and the well-mail'd sons of Achaia—
Unto the plain to descend, and to witness the terms of the treaty:
For Alexander's self, and the Arès-loved Menelaus,
Now, at the point of the spear, are about to do battle for Helen.
She and the plunder'd wealth will remain as the prize of the victor.

[t] Or Pollux.

While all the rest of the hosts, in peace and in treaties united,
We, of Troy, repossess her fertile plains ;—and the Argives
Visit their steeds once more, and the beautiful dames of Achaia."

Thus did he speak :—and the old man shudder'd ; and bade his attendants
Harness the steeds to his car ;—and they promptly obey'd his command-
ment.
Then Priam mounted the car, and he tighten'd the reins of the coursers ;
Till by his side Antenor the beautiful car had ascended :
Then through the Scæan gates he directed the steeds to the country.
When they arrived at the ranks of the sons of Troy and Achaia,
Down on the fertile earth from the glittering car they alighted,
And, in the open space, went right in the midst of the armies :
Rose up then, all quickly, the king of men, Agamemnon :
Rose up Odysseus, renown'd for suggestive counsel :—the heralds
Proffer'd the sacred pledges of treaty, and mix'd in the goblet
Wine, and pour'd pure water aloft on the hands of the monarchs.
Then did Atrides draw his dagger-knife from its scabbard,
Where it was hung, side to side, by the massive sheath of the broadsword ;
Cropp'd from the heads of the lambs the short-curl'd wool, which the
heralds
Portion'd around unto all of the chiefs, both of Troy and Achaia[n].
Then did Atrides pray—with hands upraised to the heavens.

"Zeus, Father ! throned upon Ida, most mighty and glorious monarch !
Thou too Sun ! that beholdest all, and that hearest of all things !
Rivers ! and thou, O Earth ! and ye powers beneath, ye Infernals !
—Powers who punish the dead for the perjury utter'd when living !—
Stand ye as witnesses all, and guard ye the faith of the treaties ! !—
If Alexander vanquish the King Menelaus in battle,
Then let him Helen retain, and the treasures keep and enjoy them :
While we again in the ships travel homeward the waste of the ocean.
If Alexander fall by the auburn-hair'd Menelaus,

[n] So as to make them participators in the sacrifice.

Then let Troy restore to us Helen and all the possessions;
And to the Argives pay such fine as is fitting and seemly:
One that may be a sign and a warning to all generations.
This, if it then be refused by Priam, the children of Priam;
If what is right and just, though Paris be slain[x], they deny us;
Then will I battle again, until all that is due be conceded:
Here will I stay in arms, till the end of the war be accomplish'd."

Thus spake the King, and passing the blade through the throats of the victims,
Stretch'd them prone on the earth, all quivering quick in the death-pang;
Panting their lives away, unnerved by the pitiless dagger.
Then all the princes around, in cups drawing wine from the goblet,
Pour'd a libation to earth, and pray'd to the Gods ever-living.
Trojans and sons of Achaia, alike was their deep imprecation.

"Zeus! most mighty and glorious King! and ye other Immortals!
They, whosoe'er they be, who first break faith in the treaty,
E'en as this wine on the earth, may their life-blood[y] stream on the pavement;—
Their, and their children's blood;—and their wives be a prey unto others."

Thus did they speak: but Cronïon as yet disallow'd the petition.
Dardan Priam again, then thus spake to both of the armies.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy, and ye well-mail'd ranks of Achaia!
I, to the lofty ramparts of Ilion, swept by the breezes,
Back will return yet again;—for mine eyes may not look on a combat,

[x] From this and other passages it seems probable that Paris was the Trojan heir-apparent. His single will, here and elsewhere, is represented as counterbalancing the wishes of the nation. Agamemnon, however, here contemplates the possibility of the Trojans themselves, after the death of Paris, refusing to do that which apparently they had professed themselves willing to accede to, if his consent could be procured. See Il. vii, v. 363.

[y] In the original "brains:" but the expression reads offensively in an English version.

Waged by a son so dear with the Ares-loved Menelaus.
Zeus, he alone, foresees, and the rest of the Gods, the Immortals,
They know,—no man knows,—which chief enters battle to perish."

Thus spake the godlike man, and the two lambs placed in the chariot[z] :
Mounted the car himself, and the reins held fast, as Antenor
High on the radiant car took his former station beside him ;
Then, round wheeling his chargers, to Ilion drove, as he left it.

Hector, the son of the King, and the godlike leader Odysseus,
First outmeasured the ground for the listed field ;—then in order
Placed in a brazen helmet the fateful lots, to determine
Which of the champions twain should first adventure his bright spear.
Pray'd to the Gods both hosts, with hands upraised to the heavens :
Trojans and sons of Achaia, they thus pray'd all to the Highest.

"Zeus, Father ! throned upon Ida, most mighty and glorious monarch !
He, whichsoever he be, who is cause of this heavy contention,
Down let him sink in destruction, as deep as the mansions of Hades ;
While all the rest of the hosts dwell in peace and in faithful alliance !"

Thus did they pray ; and the lots, great Hector, glancing his bright crest,
Shook, with averted eyes :—thy lot leap'd forth, Alesander !
Then to the ranks went back each chief, to the place where his war-steeds
Stood by his radiant car, and his arms lay in order beside it.

Then, for the coming strife, did the godlike chief Alesander,
Fair-tress'd Helen's consort, array him in glittering harness[a].
First on his legs did he fasten the beautiful greaves :—all in silver
Shone, on the edge of the armor, the hasps where it fitted together.
Then, on his breast, did he buckle a corslet of proof, which Lycaon,

[z] To be shown in Troy as tokens of the treaty.

[a] The armor which he wore when skirmishing in the van was probably of a lighter description.

E'en his own brother, gave: and it fitted his form to a marvel.
Then on his shoulder suspended the weight of his sword, starr'd in silver;
Temper'd brass[b] was the blade;—then the strong orb took of his buckler.
Then on his head did he fasten the well-wrought fence of the helmet,
Tufted with horses' hair; with the crest nodding terribly o'er it.
Then took his tough ash spear—well fitting his grasp as he held it.
So, on Achaia's side, did Atrides sheathe him in armor[c].

Thus when, apart from the throng, was each champion arm'd for the battle,
Into the central space they strode, between Troy and Achaia.
Stern and fix'd their gaze: suspense held mute the beholders,
Troy's chivalrous sons, and the well-mail'd sons of Achaia.
Now, in the measur'd lists, did the champions stand;—each on other
Bending his looks of hate, each shaking his glittering jav'lin.
First then his hurtling spear Alesander sent at his foeman;
Fair and true it struck on the circular shield of Atrides.
Fair and true it struck;—but the temper'd plates of the buckler,
Turn'd up the point of the spear, and it bounded back blunted and bloodless.
Then, unto Father Zeus, prayed Atrides, grasping his weapon.

"Zeus! ever throned upon high, give my right arm strength for the vengeance;
Low in the dust to lay the fair form of the foe who has wrong'd me!
So men fearing the fate, may flee from the sin of the dastard;
He who, received as a guest, stripp'd the hearth of the host who received him!"

Brandishing then he hurl'd his far-shadowing[d] spear; and its point struck

[b] Probably in reality bronze; viz., copper with a slight alloy of tin. A metal which can be tempered so as to be nearly as hard as steel.

[c] That is, he probably had the whole examined, in order to see that the fastenings were perfect. For he must have been already fully armed.

[d] That is, the spear, in its rapid motion, left a trail of shadow, as a sky-rocket leaves a trail of light.

Fairly, of Priam's son, on the round shield, equal on all sides.
Right through the shining shield did the strong spear hurry, and piercing
Through, ripp'd up in its passage the damascene work of the corslet;
And through the under-garment, and down by the flank of the Trojan
Drove far out.—But he bent sharp down, and eluded the death stroke.—
Baring then his sword—all studded with silver—Atrides,
On full stretch, struck the crest of his foe:—but the faithless falchion
Fail'd,—and the flashing fragments flew from the hand of its master.
Groan'd then Atrides aloud, and his eyes raised upward, and mutter'd.

"Zeus, Father Zeus! art thou then false as the rest of the great Gods?
Unto thine aid have I trusted to punish the baseness of Paris.
Vain was the trust:—for the falchion fails: and the point of my jav'lin
Flies from my arm in vain, and has pierced not the breast of the dastard!"

Then rushing on, and seizing the horse-hair crest of the Trojan,
Backward he turn'd, and dragg'd him along to the ranks of Achaia[e].
Rich with embroider'd work, the leathern strap of the helmet
Pressing the warrior's throat, half-strangled and held him resistless.
Then would Atrides have master'd his foe, and won glory upon him;
But to the rescue hurried the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodìte,
Bursting the strap of the casque—though cut from the hide of a slain bull[f]—
So that the crested helm came empty away in his strong grasp.
Whirling it high around, 'mid the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia,
Fiercely the helmet he flung, and his trusty attendants secured it:
Then, with his brandish'd spear[g], all eager to slaughter his foeman,
Rush'd to the charge;—but again to the rescue came Aphrodìte;
Easily bore him away—as a God can—shrouded in vapors;

[e] The spear of Menelaus being still in the shield and corslet of Paris, would prevent his drawing his sword, or otherwise effectually resisting this attack by an unarmed man.
[f] Supposed to be stronger than the hide of a beast which dies by disease.
[g] The spear of Paris, picked up by Menelaus?

Bore him, and set him down in his chamber breathing of odors.

Then did the Goddess go to call Helen, and speedily found her
On the high tower of Troy ;—Troy's dames in a circle about her.
Near her the Goddess stood, and the fragrant hem of her garment
Twitch'd—all her godhead hid 'neath the form of an ancient attendant ;
One who for Helen erst, when she lived in thy vale, Lacedæmon !
Dressing the snow-white wool, and was most attach'd of her servants.
Liken'd in form unto her, thus whisper'd the Queen Aphrodìte.

"Hist ! come hither.—'Tis Paris calls,—he awaits thy returning
Safe, and reclin'd on the well-carved couch, in his nuptial chamber :
Radiant alike in form and apparel. Thou wouldst not suppose him
Parted fresh from the fight ; but rather array'd for the dancers ;
Or, having ended the dancing, reclining, and thinking of slumber."

Thus spake the Goddess ; and roused up the soul in the bosom of Helen.
But, when she saw, recognising, the exquisite neck of the Goddess ;
Breasts, raising soft desires, the sparkling light of her eyeballs ;
Thus, with a thrill of alarm, she call'd her by name and address'd her.

"Goddess e'en as thou art, is it thus thy design to deceive me ?
No further point is there yet amid all of the populous cities
Built upon Phrygian soil, or Mæonian, where I must wander ?
Seeking thy latest choice, whosoever he be, among mortals ?
And is it now because Menelaus has vanquish'd his rival,
Seeking my hateful self, and now to my home would restore me,
Is it for this thou art here, thus attempting to snare and seduce me ?
Off to the man thyself !—Abjure all the ways of Immortals !
Let not again thy feet tread the glittering paths of Olympus !
All for his sake.—Sit and weep by his side !—Let thy presence protect him !
Slave thou at least mayst be, should he fail to take pity, and wed thee.—
But thither go I not.—'Twere a thing to call vengeance upon me.—

Never by me shall his couch be shared.—How the dames of the Trojans
All would mock and jeer!—and my heart is too heavy already."

Then unto Helen, thus, much incensed, spake the Queen Aphrodìte.
"Move me not, wretch, unto wrath, lest perchance in my wrath I desert thee.
Hating thee, all as much as I, erst, have exceedingly loved thee;
Turning upon thee alike, all eager to view thy perdition,
Troy's and Achaia's sons; and thou wretchedly perish for ever."

Thus did she speak, and the daughter of Zeus was afraid as she heard her.
Veil'd in her glittering robe she arose, and departed in silence,
All unmark'd by the ladies of Troy:—and the Goddess preceded.

But to the beautiful home when they came, of the prince Alesander,
Back to their household tasks went quickly her trusty attendants;
And to the uppermost chamber of all went the fairest of women.
Then, in the front of Paris, a seat did the Queen Aphrodìte,
Laughter-loving dame, herself convey and arrange it:
There sat Helen down—child of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder;—
Turning her eyes to the ground; and she bitterly greeted her consort.

"So! Thou art back from the war!——Better, far, hadst thou died in the battle!
Humbled beneath *his* arm—the redoubtable spouse of my girlhood.
Oh, for the many times thou'st vaunted thy might, and thy manhood,
Courage, and skill in arms, above his,—Àres-loved Menelaus!!
Hence with thee!—Challenge again to the lists Àres-loved Menelaus!
Meet him again in the field!—Yet pause for an instant!—I bid thee,
I, even I, bid thee pause:—nor thus to the fair Menelaus
Venture again in thy folly to stand, an unequal opponent;
Lest in the fight his spear too soon drink the blood of a weakling."

Then Alesander replied, and thus did he speak and address her.

"Lady! my mind excite not thus with thy bitter reproaches!
This day Atrides won—he has conquer'd by aid of Athène:—
My turn next may arrive:—for we too have Gods to befriend us.
But let the present time be devoted to love and enjoyment!
Never before, as now, did the torrent of love overwhelm me:
Not when I bore thee first, as my prize, in my sea-cleaving galleys,
Bore thee away, far away, from the vale of the fair Lacedæmon,
And in the Cranaan isle first tasted love's sweet consummation,
Not even then did I love thee as now,—did I long to possess thee."

Speaking, he moved to the couch, and his consort follow'd reluctant:
So, on the sculptured couch did they taste love's sweetness and slumber.

In the meanwhile, up and down, in and out through the throng of the armies,
Roved, like a wild beast frenzied, Atrides, searching for Paris.
But of the sons of Troy, or the notable aids of the Trojan,
None could his foe point out to the Ăres-loved Menelaus.
Little, in sooth, for their love to the man, had they sought to conceal him:
Hateful, as death itself, was the dastard to friend as to foeman.

Then to the listening hosts spake the king of men, Agamemnon.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy!—brave Dardans!—aids of the Trojan!
Victory clearly remains with the Ăres-loved Menelaus.
Render ye, therefore, up Argive Helen, and all the possessions:
And do ye also pay such a fine as is fitting and seemly:
One that may stand as a sign and a token to all generations."

Thus did Atrides speak: the Achaians shouted approval.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

Shows how the Gods consult :—gone the truce :—and the battle is joining.

But around Zeus did the Gods hold converse, seated together
On Heav'n's golden pavement :—amid them the radiant Hèbe
Pouring the nectar out :—and in golden bowls the Immortals
Pledged their fellow-Gods ; and gazed on the wall of the Trojans.
Zeus then, ever alert to excite and exasperate Hère,
Spake with taunting words, and attempted to rouse her to anger.

"Two of immortal race are the guardian Gods of Atrides ;
Argive Hère's self, and Alalcomenæan Athène[a].
They, far away from the field, sit apart but as idle spectators,
Pleased with the fight. But the laughter-loving dame Aphrodìte
Ever is near to her champion ; warding the fates that attend him ;
Rescues him, e'en as we see, safe and whole when expecting to perish.
Yet does the conquest rest with the Àres-loved Menelaus.
Then let the Deities say what result is to happen from these things.
Shall we again stir up horrid war, and the turmoil of battle ?
Or bind hostile nations in peace, and in friendship together ?
If unto this all yield, and if no God baffles the treaty,
Then may the city of Priam, the king, be inhabited always.
Argive Helen again may revisit the home of Atrides."

Thus did he speak : and deeply Athène murmur'd, and Hère ;

[a] So called from Alalcomenos, a district of Bœotia, where she was worshipped.—Trollope.

Close as together they sat, devising ills for the Trojans.
Yet, altho' bitter her anger, no accent escaped from Athène:
Wild as her anger was, she respected her father in great Zeus.
Hère kept not her wrath in control, but spake sharply in answer.

"Cronĭdes, sternest of Gods! what an ill-advised speech thou hast utter'd!
Wouldest thou my labor annul, my design leave all unaccomplish'd?
Vain all the toil that I toil'd?——When my steeds scarce sufficed for my journey,
Rousing the nations on Priam himself, and the children of Priam.
Do it, if such be thy will!—But the rest of the Gods will applaud not."

Then, all indignant, thus spake the cloud-compeller to Hère.
"Oh, what grievous sins has Priam's self, have his children,
Sinn'd, that thy soul should thus be so bitterly anger'd against them,
Seeking the fall of Troy, of the well-built streets of her city?
Enter her lofty gates!—and her ramparts raze!—in thy fury
—Seize—as a beast on its prey—upon Priam, the children of Priam,
All of the sons of Troy!—So perchance may thy wrath be assuagèd.
Do it!—if such be thy will—and then, at the least, for the future
Troy, in her ruins, yields no cause of contention between us.
But, let me say to thee this, and be careful my words are remember'd!
Should I in turn be disposed to destroy any favorite city,
Dearest esteem'd by thyself, held by men whom thou guardest and lovest,
Then let the vengeance fall!—nor, thinking of Troy, try to check me!
For, unforced, do I yield to thee this, though my heart swells against it.
For, of the manifold towns where earthly men have a dwelling,
All that behold yon sun, and are under the star-spangled heaven,
Ilion, sacred town, unto me is the nearest and dearest:
Dearest to me are Priam, and all the brave people of Priam.
Never, from hands of theirs, has mine altar wanted a victim,
Incense, or rich libation:—such service they ever have rendered."

Then unto Zeus yet again spake majestic-eyed Hère in answer.

"True is it, three fair cities to me are the dearest of any;
Sparta, the Argive wall, and the wide-built streets of Mycenæ!
Overthrow these, if thou wilt; if thy soul is embitter'd against them!
Nor will I seek to protect them, nor grudge to abandon them to thee.
If I bewept their fall at thy hands, if I sought to protect them,
What would my tears or assistance avail?—Thou art stronger than I am.
Thou, in return, shouldst mind what I do, nor attempt to annul it.
I am a God, as thou:—and my birth is as lofty as thine is.
Worthiest I of respect amid all of the children of Cronos;
Even as eldest in birth, and in right of my place as thy consort:
Consort of him who reigns over all of the race of Immortals.
Then in affairs like to these let us yield, as befits, to each other;
I unto thee, thou to me!—Full soon will so fair an example
Bind the immortal Gods.—Then give thy command to Athène,
Bid her descend to the field of fight between Troy and Achaia;
Bid her contrive that the sons of Troy first rupture the treaty,
First may assail the Achaians, in this the full glory of triumph!"

Thus did she speak; and the Father of men and of Gods disobey'd not;
Turning at once to Athène, and rapidly thus he address'd her.

"Go! and descend in haste to the hosts of Troy and Achaia!
See, and contrive that the sons of Troy first rupture the treaty;
First may assail the Achaians in this the full glory of triumph."

Such the command of Zeus; right joyfully heard it Athène.
Eager, she shot to the earth from the glittering peaks of Olympus:
Shot, like a meteor sent by Cronïon down from the heavens,
Sent unto men at sea, or to leaguering hosts, as a portent:
Dazzling bright, and the numberless sparks leave a glory behind it.
Even so swift, so bright, to the earth shot Pallas Athène.
Down did she shoot in the midst; and a thrill shook all the beholders,
Troy's chivalrous sons, and the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia.
Such were the words of the hosts, as they whisper'd each to his comrade.

" Either the curse of war, and the mournful turmoil of battle
Soon will again commence ; or Zeus, who dispenses to mortals
War or peace at his will, shall unite us in lasting alliance."

Thus the Achaians spake ;—such too were the words of the Trojans.
While, 'mid the hosts of Troy—but in form as a mortal—the Goddess
Went ; in Laodocus' likeness ; the gallant son of Antènor.
Searching in every quarter for Pandarus, eager to find him.
Soon did she find at his post, the redoubtable son of Lycàon ;
Standing in arms :—and the shield-bearing ranks of his men stood around him ;
All of the men of might whom he led from thy stream, Æsèpus !
Near him the Goddess came, and eagerly thus she address'd him.

" Wilt thou be rulèd by me, thou valorous son of Lycàon ?
Dar'st thou an arrow to aim and direct from thy bow at Atrides ?
Great were the praise to be won from the Trojans, and great were the fame too ;
Favor from all in Troy, but the most from the prince Alesander.
Think of the gifts—how rich—that the prince would bestow, should his rival,—
Even the stern Menelaus, the warrior son of Atreus,—
Lie on the funereal pile, and stricken to death by thine arrow !
Send then a shaft at once to the heart of the great Menelaus !
But to Apollo, first, to the shrine of the Lycian archer,
Vow, of the firstling lambs, full hecatombs meet for his altars,
When, to thine home return'd, back again in the walls of Zeleia !"

Thus spake Athène.—Insensate[b], he yielded his sense to the temptress.
All in haste he snatch'd out the polish'd bow from the bow-case :
—Spoil of an ibex fleet was the bow ; which the chief had encounter'd
As it descended the rocks to the place where he waited in ambush ;
Pierced its shaggy breast ; and it roll'd supine on the mountain.

[b] The play on the words accords with the original.

Sixteen palms in length were the horns on its head ; these the workman
Skilfully joined, and taper'd, and work'd up smoothly together,
Polish'd the whole, and of gold on the horns put tips for the bowstring.—
Such was the warrior's bow.—And he bent and carefully fix'd it,
Resting it firm on the ground ; and his men held bucklers before him ;
Lest an attack meanwhile should be made by the sons of Achaia,
Ere yet the deed was done, and the blow was dealt on Atrides.
Then did he tear off the lid[c] from the quiver, and draw out an arrow,
New, and wing'd for death ;—black woes were attendant upon it.
Hastily fitted the arrow—the bitter shaft—to the bowstring :
Unto Apollo vow'd—to the shrine of the Lycian archer—
Vow'd, of the firstling lambs, full hecatombs meet for his altars ;
When, to his home return'd, back again in the walls of Zeleia ;—
Seizing the end of the shaft, and the tough leathern bowstring ;—he drew them,
Drew, till the string met his breast[d], and the bow met the head of the arrow,—
Bending the horns of the bow to a semicircle before him ;—
Then the bow whizz'd, and the bowstring twang'd, and the shaft from the bowstring
Bounded impatient away, to its mark 'mid the host of Achaia.

But of thy life, Menelaus! the happy Immortals, the great Gods,
Were not unmindful then :—and the daughter of Zeus, Agelaia[e],
Standing in front, as the foremost, averted the furious weapon :
Turning the blow on one side, as a mother, who watches her infant,
Brushes the insect aside that would trouble the child in its slumber ;
So did Athène divert that shaft where the belt was united
Firm by its clasps of gold, and the skirt lay under the corslet[f].

[c] The ancient quivers had lids.

[d] Almost all nations, except the English, drew the arrow to the breast, and not to the ear. Hence the superiority of the English archers.

[e] A title of Athène—"the plunderer"—as protectress of predatory warfare.

[f] That is, where the armor, by overlapping, was of extra strength.

There, on the stiff-wrought belt, fell the stinging point of the arrow.—
Right through the stiff-wrought belt, enrich'd with device of the artist,
Then, underneath the belt, through the damascene work of the corslet:
And worn next to his flesh, through the skirt protecting his body,
Trustiest guard of all, through this drove the furious weapon:
Drove its point just through, and punctured the flesh of the hero.
Forth from the mouth of the wound did the dark blood flow in an instant.
As a Meonian dame, or a Carian, stains with the purple
Ivory, white in grain, for a head-trapping, meet for the war-steeds;
Hoarded—a work of art—up safe in a chamber of treasures;
Long'd for by many in vain, kings only may hope to possess it;
Ornament rich of the steed, and a glory and pride to the driver:
Thus, Menelaus! the blood flow'd streaming under the armor,
Staining thy shapely thighs, and trickling e'en to thine ankles.

Thrill'd with terror, the monarch, the king of men, Agamemnon;
As he regarded the wound, and the dark blood oozing around it.
Thrill'd with terror, himself, the Ares-loved Menelaus:
But when he saw that the barbs of the shaft stood out from his armor,
Then did his spirits revive, and his heart was collected within him.
Then, with a deep-drawn groan, spake the king of men, Agamemnon,
Holding his brother's hand;—'mid the groans of surrounding companions.

"Was it, O brother dear! for thy death I concluded a treaty,
Setting thee, all by thyself, to do battle with Troy for Achaia?
Treaties are trampled in dust, and thy breast is a mark for their arrows!
Yet can it never be true that the oaths, that the blood of the victims,
Right hands pledged, and libations, can all be forgotten in heaven.
What if the God, the Olympian, do not this instant perform it,
Yet will he do it at last, and the penalty then will be doubled;
Then shall the vengeance fall upon them, on their wives and their issue!
For I am well assured, in my inmost soul do I know it,
Surely the day rolls on that sees Ilion perish for ever;

Perish, with warlike Priam, and all the brave people of Priam[g].
Cronides, e'en as I speak, great Zeus, who dwells in the heavens,
Brandishes, throned upon high, his terrible Ægis against them;
Wroth at this breach of faith:—and nought shall remain unaccomplish'd.
But not a common grief for thy doom—O beloved Menelaus,
Waits me, if such is thy fate; thus doom'd prematurely to perish.
Shame and dishonor then will await my return unto Argos:
Soon for their fatherland will be yearning the baffled Achaians;
Soon shall we leave as a boast to the sons of Troy and of Priam,
Argive Helen, the cause of the war;—while the bones of my brother
Moulder in Trojan dust;—the design of the war unaccomplish'd.
Thus then, perchance, will exclaim some arrogant chief of the Trojans,
Leaping, in proud disdain, on the tomb of the stout Menelaus;
'May success, such as this, ever wait on the wrath of Atrides;
Such as he now has achieved, at the head of the hosts of Achaia.
Homeward the terrible chief has return'd to the land of his fathers;
Homeward, with emptied ships, and leaving his brother behind him.'
Thus will the Trojans boast.—Yawn, earth! for my grave, ere it be so!"

Cheering his brother, then spake the auburn-hair'd Menelaus.
"Courage! and say not a word to discourage the hosts of Achaia!
Guiltless of fate is the shaft;—for the strength combined of my harness,—
Both my embroider'd belt; and, beneath it, the plates of the cuirass;
Meeting the under-skirt, stiff armorer's work—have repell'd it."

Joyfully, then, in reply, spake the king of men, Agamemnon.
"So be it, e'en as thou say'st!—Ever thus, O beloved Menelaus!
Yet must the leech see the wound; lay drugs of healing upon it;
So shall the danger pass, and the terrible pains be averted."

Then did the monarch summon Talthybius; and thus address him.
"Hasten, with quickest speed! Find out, and bid hither, Machaon!
Him, the renownèd son of a father famous for healing.

[g] The same three lines occur in the speech of Hector to Andromachè, in Il. vi. 79

Bid him come hither and see Menelaus, prince of Achaia ;
Stricken, but now, by a shaft from the bow of some notable archer ;
Trojan or Lycian shaft !—our woe, but a joy to the foeman."

Thus did the monarch speak : and the herald heard, and obey'd him :
Quickly he travers'd the host of the well-mail'd sons of Achaia,
Looking around for Machaon ;—and soon did the herald discern him
Standing, arm'd ; and the ranks of his soldiers were marshall'd around him ;
Warriors, arm'd with shields, from the steed-famed plains of Tricca.
Near him the herald stood, and eagerly thus he address'd him.

" Haste, Æsculapius' son !—Thou'rt call'd by the King Agamemnon :
Call'd, to attend to the wound of his father's son, Menelaus ;
Stricken, but now, by a shaft from the bow of some notable archer ;
Trojan or Lycian shaft—our woe, but a joy to the foeman !"

Thus did the herald speak ; and Machaon eagerly heard him.
Quickly the twain came back through the wide-spread host of Achaia.
But when they came to the place where the auburn-hair'd Menelaus
Wounded stood,—where around him were gather'd the chiefs of the people,
All their mightiest men, and the godlike chief in the centre—
Soon from the belt did the leech draw backward the head of the arrow ;
—Though, as he drew it forth, bent the sharp barbs back in the armor—
Then he unbuckled the belt of embroider'd work, and beneath it
Loosen'd the corslet of proof, and the under-skirt of the harness.
And, when he look'd on the wound, where the bitter arrow had struck him,
Pressing the clotted blood, laid drugs of healing upon it ;
Drugs of soothing power, which Chiron gave to his father.

While they were busied thus with the valorous chief Menelaus,
Onward, in hostile guise, came the shielded ranks of the Trojans :
Then they resumed their arms, and bethought them again of the onset.
Not as a sluggard, then, had you counted the King Agamemnon ;
Nor as a skulker from fight, nor as one with no heart for the combat ;

But pressing foremost on, all eager for glorious battle.
Steeds, and glittering car, all gleaming in brass, he deserts them;
Leaves his snorting steeds to Eurymedon's care—his attendant,—
Son of Pereius' son, of the valorous chief Ptolemæus:
Straitly enjoining him close to abide by the chargers, and bring them
Ready to rest his limbs, when fatigued with his toils as a leader.
Then, upon foot, did he pass through the ranks of the host, and array'd them:
And wheresoever he met with the Danai eager for battle,
Thus he encouraged the troops with approval, and words of incentive.

"Argives! abate not now one jot of your valorous spirit!
Deem not that Father Zeus views perjured men with approval.
They who have trampled first on the plighted faith of the treaties,
Death is their destined doom;—their flesh shall be food for the vultures.
Wives, and tender babes, we shall lead them alike to our galleys;
Carry them captive away; and the false town sack, and destroy it."

But if, perchance, he remark'd any troops faint-hearted for combat,
Thus, with reproachful words, he accosted, and roused them to action.

"Skulkers!—disgrace of your country!—does no deep shame overwhelm you?
Why do ye shrink from the fray, all aghast, like the deer of the forest?
Standing like frighten'd fawns, all herding dishearten'd together,
Wearied and faint with the chace o'er the far expanse of the wide plain?
Such, and no better, ye stand, all amazed, and refrain from the onset!
Say! do ye tarry thus till the Trojans enter your galleys?
Storm your ships as they lie on the shore of the dark-gray ocean?
Waiting resign'd, to discern if Cronïon's arm will protect you?"

Acting the leader, thus, did he marshal the ranks of the armies.—
First, 'mid the crush of chiefs, did he come to the post of the Cretans.
There were his troops by the side of Idomeneus, arming for battle.

Strong as a mountain-boar, stood the prince himself in the vanguard :
Merion marshall'd the rear, and compacted the ranks of the phalanx.
Joyful in heart at the sight was the King of men, Agamemnon :
Kind and gracious the words that he spake to the king of the Cretans.

" None of the Danaan host is deserving of honor as thou art !
Whether in war or in peace, thou, prince, art the foremost among us !
Foremost in place at the feast ; when the dark wine gleams in the goblet,
And the great Argive chiefs mix fuller cups for their noblest.
Others, perchance, may then, of the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia,
Drink of a stinted draught :—but thy goblet is ever replenish'd ;
Even as mine it remains :—ever fill'd ; ever waiting the drinker.
Great, as thou always wert, rouse up, gallant prince, to the battle !"

Thus, to the King, in reply, spake Idomeneus, prince of the Cretans.
" Doubt it not, Atreus' son !—I shall still hold fast to my promise !
E'en as I said at first, I will still be thy trusty companion.
Sound then thy words in the ears of the rest of the sons of Achaia ;
So may the battle join :—for the treaty is broken asunder,
Broken by Troy's false sons.—Surely death and destruction await them ;
Even the doom of men who first dare to rupture a treaty."

Thus spake the Cretan king, and Atrides joyfully onward
Pass'd, 'mid the crush of chiefs, till he came where the mighty Ajaces
Stood, fast arming for fight :—and around them the cloud of the spearmen.
As, looking out to the sea, when a swain, from a prominent headland,
Watches a storm roll up 'neath the boisterous blast of the West-wind ;
Coming up, dark as pitch, from afar, o'er the face of the ocean ;
And, in its lap, the cloud brings a white squall tearing before it :—
Shuddering, fast he descends, and houses his charge in the caverns :—
Thus, 'neath the mighty Ajaces, the high-born youths that obey'd them,
Dark with their shields—as the cloud,—rough with spears—as the crests of the billows,—
Moved, in their serried ranks, as a living tempest, to battle.

Joyful in heart at the sight of the troops was the King Agamemnon;
Joyfully call'd to the chiefs, and in wingèd words he address'd them.

"Little by you, brave chiefs of Achaia, redoubted Ajaces,
Little is needed from me any word of advice or incentive!
Such the example ye set, to encourage the host to the onset.
Would! that Father Zeus, and Athène's self, and Apollo,
Granted to every heart such a spirit as glows in your own breasts!
Then would the day arrive, full soon, for the city of Priam,
Captured by Argive hands, to be sack'd and consign'd to destruction."

Thus did the monarch speak; and departed, and went to the next band:
There was the Pylian king: the harmonious orator, Nestor,
Ranging his men for fight, and pressing them onward to battle:
Chromius marshall'd the troops, and Pelagon too, and Alastor,
Bias, shepherd of tribes, and Hæmon, prince of the people[h].
Right in the van did the king set the battle-chargers and war-cars;
Many and tried in fight in the rear were the ranks of the spearmen;—
Bulwark they of the war—and the faint hearts posted between them;
Where, with no stomach for battle, a man perforce is a soldier.
Those who were guiding the cars he instructed and straitly commanded,
Tightly to hold in the steeds, nor wildly career in the tumult.
"Let not a man," said the sage, "on his skill or his courage reliant,
Venture, in front of the ranks, to join battle alone with the Trojans:
Nor let him fall to the rearward: and weaken the ranks of his comrades.
If a man leaving his own meet a hostile car in the combat,
On, with protended spear, let him charge:—it is thus that a field 's won.
Thus did of old our fathers the fortresses storm of the foemen;
Such were the courage and skill that were found in the breasts of the victors."

[h] It is singular that neither here nor in the Catalogue, is there any mention of Nestor's sons, Antilochus and Thrasymedes; although both of them, especially the former, hold distinguished places in the subsequent parts of the poem; Antilochus (*infrà*, v. 457) having the honour of drawing the first blood in the first battle.

Thus did the elder speak: well versed in the wars of the old times.
Glad to his inmost heart at the sight was the King Agamemnon:
Joyful he spake to the sage; and with wingèd words he address'd him.

"Would, Father! e'en as the spirit remains unquench'd in thy bosom,
So, were thy limbs well strung, and thy former strength unabated!
Thine is the common fate!—Would! old-age now could release thee!
Seize upon some other man; and remit thee again to thy vigor!"

Then to the King, in reply, the Gerenian horseman, Nestor.
"Would it were even so!—Would now I were such, as I once was,
When Ereuthalion died by my hand in the battle, Atrides[1]!
But not at once do the Gods send all good gifts unto mortals:
Then was the spring of my youth:—I am number'd now with the elders.
Yet, though my youth is past, I may still find a place 'mid the war-steeds;
Still give advice and counsel to those who are younger in battle.
Such is the elder's part: but the spear, and the strife of the warrior,
These appertain to the young, new born, and exulting in vigor."

Thus did the elder speak; and Atrides parted rejoicing.
Soon he arrived at the post where the horse-famed hero, Menestheus,
Stood unmoved; and around him the martial Athenian levies.
Next to Menestheus' troops was the much-suggestive Odysseus;
And by the chieftain's side was the stout Cephalonian phalanx:
Motionless yet they remain'd: not as yet they distinguish'd the war-cry;
Yet unexplain'd the disturbance, the movement of men, and the tumult
Rousing up Troy and Achaia: collected they stood, and observant,
Waiting the course of events; whether some other mass of Achaians
First would the foe assail, and fix the commencement of battle.
Motionless thus as they stood, did the King of men, Agamemnon,
View them, with mind disturb'd, and reproachfully thus he address'd them.

"Peteus' son! Zeus-born, from a regal father descended!

[1] A more detailed account of this achievement is given in the 7th Il.

Thou too,—skill'd in all dangerous wiles, and all crafty designings!
Why thus, aloof from the fight, do ye stand here, waiting for others?
Yours were it rather to stand as the first, at the head of the vanguard:
There, in the foremost ranks, to be rousing the heat of the combat.
First should ye be in the field:—ye are ever the first at the banquet;
When the high feast is spread for the chiefs of the sons of Achaia;
None than yourselves, loves better to share in the choice of the victim;
None than yourselves, loves better to quaff the rich juice of the wine-cup.
But in the day of battle ye tamely relinquish precedence;
Calmly regarding the columns that show you the way to the combat."

Then, with a wrathful look, spake the much-devising Odysseus.
"Why! what a speech is this, that has pass'd o'er thy lips, O Atrides!
Say'st thou we shrink from the fight?—When the battle joins,—when Achaia
Mingles with Troy's brave chieftains in sharpest contest together,
Then, thou shalt see if thou wilt—if thou carest to venture and see it—
See, that Telemachus boasts of a father who wars in the vanguard,
Far in the ranks of Troy!——But thy words are too light for remembrance."

Then,—for he saw he was anger'd—the King of men, Agamemnon,
Answer'd again, with a smile, and softened his former reproaches.

"High-born son of Laertes, O much-contriving Odysseus!
Little, is needed by thee of command, or the word of incentive.
Well do I know thy worth:—how thy soul in the depth of thy bosom
Harbors no angry thoughts;—thy feelings are ever as mine are!
Inopportune if the speech I have spoken, we soon will amend it:
Soon will right the wrong;—may the Gods themselves over-rule it!"

Thus did the monarch speak; and he pass'd, and went on to the others.
Then did he come to Tydides, the high-mettled prince Diomèdes,
Standing amidst his steeds, and the serried ranks of his warriors.
Sthenelus, close by his side,—thy valorous son, Capanèus!

Motionless thus as they stood, did the King of men, Agamemnon,
View them with mind disturb'd, and reproachfully thus he address'd them.

"Son of a warlike sire, O son of the chivalrous Tydeus,
Why thus skulking, and gazing afar on the ridges of battle?
Tydeus never was willing to act in the part of a skulker;
Far in advance of his comrades he went ever straight at his foemen.
So they, at least, affirm who have seen him in fight: for the hero
Mine eyes never beheld; but of men he was foremost reputed.
Once, not in hostile guise, did he enter the wall of Mycènæ;
But as a guest, raising troops; with the godlike prince Polynices:
Under the Theban rampart their forces were camp'd; and they pray'd for,
Fervently pray'd for, in vain, the redoubtable aid of the Argives.
Willing were we to consent, and comply with their urgent entreaties;
But we were stay'd by Zeus, who deterr'd us with terrible portents.
Then went the chieftains away, back again, and were far on the journey,
E'en at the grassy meads and the rush-grown banks of Asòpus,
When, at Achaia's voice, far away, on a perilous message,
Tydeus again went forth;—and he came where the chiefs of the Thebans
Sat at the well-throng'd board in the house of the strong Eteòcles.
Stranger there as he was, not there did the chivalrous Tydeus
Feel one thrill of fear, all alone 'mid the chiefs of the Thebans:
Challeng'd them all to the games; and in all he was more than the victor:—
Vanquish'd them all with ease:—such a helper was Pallas Athène.
Sore were the Thebans chafed: and they craftily planted an ambush,
Placing a chosen band to await the return of the hero:
Fifty chosen youths: two chiefs led the treacherous levy;
Mæon, the son of Hæmon, a warrior like the Immortals,
Thy son, Autophonus, too, the redoubtable chief Lycophontes.
Tydeus truly they met:—and dire was the doom that befell them:
One yet again saw home;—all his comrades died in the battle:
Mæon alone was saved;—for the Gods bade spare, so he spared him.
Such was the prowess of Tydeus;—Ætolia's pride:—his descendant,
Lacking his father's renown in the field, far excels him in talking."

So said the King. Not a word in reply spake the brave Diomèdes:
Speechless the scoff he endured, in respect to the rank of his leader.

But, in retort to the King, spake the son of the great Capanèus.
"Speak not falsely, Atrides:—thou wittest full well what the truth is.
We, are by no jot worse, but are better by far than our fathers.
We, not alone assail'd, but we master'd the town of the Theban;
Storm'd, and with scantier troops, its seven gates and its ramparts.
For we relied on Zeus, and the omens on high; and we conquer'd,
Where our sires had fail'd, and had wretchedly died in their madness.
Venture not then to affirm that our fame is no higher than theirs is."

Then, with a look severe, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.
"Silence, my friend!—Keep silence! and listen to what I shall tell you!
I do not dare to blame Agamemnon, prince of the people,
Striving, as now, to arouse the Achaian host to the battle.
His were the highest glory, should ever the sons of Achaia
Master the Trojan wall, and humble the pride of the Trojans.
His were the deepest grief, should Achaia be foil'd in the contest.
Now, let the care of us both be to mingle in fight with the foemen."

Thus did the hero speak; and he bounded, in arms, from the war-car.
Dreadful the brazen clang on the gallant breast of the monarch,
Fierce as he rush'd into fight.—Brave the foe who unmoved had beheld him!

As when the South-west wind stirs the deep, and the waves of the ocean
Break on a rock-bound beach;—wave on wave in unending succession;—
First, far away out at sea, the dark surges heave in their furrows;
Then, rolling in on the shore, burst in thunder and foam; and the headlands
Hurl back the wash of the sea: and the white spray shivers around them:—
So, in unending succession, the Danaan troops moved to battle;
Phalanx on phalanx rang'd.—Nought heard save the voice of the leaders,
Ordering each his men: all the rest moved silently after;

—You might have deem'd them dumb, so great was the host and the silence,—
Listening all for the word of the chiefs;—and the gleam of their armor
Flash'd in broken light, as the hosts roll'd terribly onwards.
But from the ranks of Troy—as the mingled sounds from the sheep-folds
Rise, when the close-pack'd ewes of some wealthy man at the milking
Hear the cries of the lambs, and bleat incessant in answer—
So, from the wide-spread armies of Troy, rose the dissonant war-cry.
Nor was there *one* battle-cry, nor *one* common language among them;
Various tongues were there;—many lands sent the numerous levies.
Àres drove on those, these Athène marshall'd to battle.
Fear and Flight were there.—There was Erys, the sister of Àres;
Consort, too, of the God;—Erys, ever unsated of carnage.
Humble her port at first; but soon does the terrible Goddess
Cleave with her head the skies, and the solid earth trembles beneath her.
She, 'mid contending hosts, sways the strife, and awakens the tumult;
Thickens the press of battle, and deepens the groans of the heroes.

But when the hosts, moving on, met at last in the shock of the combat,
Shield then encounter'd shield; spear, spear; with the might of the warriors
Cuirass'd in brazen mail.—The well-boss'd orbs of the bucklers
Rang, as they clash'd in fight:—and the tumult rose to the heavens.
Rose deep groans of the slain, the exulting shouts of the slayers,
In a discordant din: and the earth ran red with the bloodshed.
Fierce as two wintry torrents[k], descending the clefts of a mountain,
Roll into one rocky basin their mass of tumultuous water;
And the two swollen tides boil eddying round in the channel,
With deep-sounding roar, heard afar over hills by the shepherd;—
Such, of the mingling hosts, was the rage, and the strife, and the turmoil.

Then, first stroke in the fray, did Antilochus slaughter a chieftain,
Known in the van of fight;—Echepòlus, son of Thalèses.
Striking him full on the helm, where the crest with its pendulous horsehair,

[k] Like the Handeck Falls, upon the Grimsel, when in flood.

Shadow'd the warrior's forehead.—The brazen point of the war-spear
Shatter'd the frontal bone; night veiling his eyelids for ever.
So, as a broken tower, he sank in the terrible contest.

Him, as he lay in death, by the feet, the high prince Elephènor,
—Son of Chalcòdon, chieftain renown'd of the valiant Abantes—
Seized; and was dragging away, from the range of the darts to despoil him
There, at ease, of his arms.—Short, truly, the work of the spoiler!
E'en as he tugg'd at the corpse, he was marked by the noble Agènor;
Who, in his fenceless side, left bare as he stoop'd by his buckler,
Plung'd the brazen spear;—his limbs sank nerveless beneath him:
Breathless he roll'd in dust[1]. Then around him, in arduous battle,
Troy's and Achaia's sons, like to wild wolves raging for slaughter,
Rush'd on, one on the other: and man slew man in the struggle.

Then Simoisius died, by the great Telamonian Ajax.
Died in the bloom of youth.—Anthemion's son; whom his mother,
Leaving the slopes of Ide with her parents, and seeking the sheep-folds,
Tending her full-fleeced charge, bore on Simois' banks:—so they call'd him,
After the sacred stream, Simoisius.—Small the requital,
Small the return he gave for his parent's care; for he perish'd,
Under a blow, premature, by the spear of redoubtable Ajax.
Just as he enter'd the fray, on his breast fell the point of the jav'lin,
High on the better side;—and sheer through the chest and the shoulder
Out at the back it drove: and he sank to the earth as a poplar,
Grown in the rich black soil of the meadows, hard by the stream bank,
Smooth in the stem, and laden with boughs from the base to the summit,
Sinks to the glittering axe in the hand of some provident artist,
Destin'd perchance to move in the wheel of a radiant war-car,
Withering in leaf and bough, it encumbers the banks of the river;—
So, did Anthemion's son, Simoisius, sink in the battle,

[1] It will be remarked that a very large proportion of the casualties on both sides is attributed by Homer to the practice of stripping the slain during the heat of combat: a practice which is constantly reprobated by Nestor and others.

Fell'd by the Argive spear.—Priam's son with the radiant cuirass,
Antiphus[m], whirl'd, through the tumult, his eager lance at the victor;
Miss'd him; but struck in the groin an attendant stout of Odysseus,
Leucus; as he was dragging the corpse from the fray to despoil it:
Over the body he sank; as his slack hand yielded its burden.
Grieved at his soldier's death did Odysseus forward, in anger,
Stride, with his jav'lin poised, through the skirmishers, right in the vanward,
Then, close at hand with the foemen, the bright spear shook, and discharged it;
Casting his glances around: Troy's bravest, backward before him,
Scatter'd, in fear of the lance: yet it flew not in vain from his strong arm;
Striking to dust in its fury, Democoon, offspring of Priam;
Base-born, and who, of late, had tended his steeds at Abydos:
Him did Odysseus thus, all wroth at the death of his comrade,
Pierce with the brazen spear on the temple, and right through the forehead,
E'en to the further side; night shrouded his eyelids for ever:
Thund'ring he fell to the ground, and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.
Back went the van of Troy, and Hector himself went among them.
And with a shout the Achaians the dead foes seized, and despoil'd them;
Then with redoubled might charged fiercely ahead: but Apollo,
Seated on Ilion's height, thus shouted in wrath to the Trojans.

"Onward, ye sons of Troy! nor relinquish the fight to the Argives!
Nor are their limbs of stone, nor their bodies fashion'd of iron:
Nor can they turn up the points, nor blunt any edge of your weapons.
Do ye forget that the chief, Goddess-born, the redoubted Achilleus,
No more rages in fight; but nurses his wrath in his galleys?"

Thus, from the heights of Troy, spake the terrible God:—the Achaians,
Too, had immortal aid; for the Goddess Tritogeneia[n],
—Daughter of Zeus—was among them; wherever the fight was the faintest.

[m] Killed by Agamemnon. Il. xi, v. 101.
[n] An epithet of Athène.

Then Amarynceus' son met his fate :—the Epeian Diòres :
Struck by a rugged stone, which the arm of the Thracian Peiros
—Imbrasus' valiant son, who had marshall'd his levies from Ænus—
Heaved and hurl'd at his foe ; and it struck his right foot by the ankle.
Full on the tendons twain and the bone, came the pitiless missile ;
Crushing them flat to the earth : so he fell on his back in the tumult ;
Stretching his hands, in vain, to his friends for the aid that arrived not :
Panting his life away. Short pantings : for conquering Peiros
Rush'd on the fainting chief; drove the spear through his body; the entrails
Gush'd from the ghastly wound ; night shrouding his eyelids for ever.
Thoas sprang to the front ; and darting his lance at the victor
Hit him, fair and true, on the breast by the pap :—and transfix'd him
Right through the lung.—Then over his foe stood the conqueror Thoas ;
Drew from his body the spear ; and baring the glittering falchion
Gash'd him from side to side :—and the fierce soul fled from the carcass.
Yet did he win no spoils : for the ranks of the Thracian spearmen,
With dark locks bound up°, closed with levell'd lances around him :
And,—all brave as he was, and puissant in fight,—they repell'd him ;
Driving him off from the corpse :—and he came hard-press'd from the contest.

Thus in the dust, side by side, lay in death two redoubtable leaders :
One of Epeian race ; and one who the Thracian levies
Led to the field :—and the soldiers of each died in heaps by their chieftains.

And had a man, protected from arrow-shafts and from lances,
Traversed the scene of strife, under guidance of Pallas Athène,
Guarded from every risk, and unheeding the flight of the jav'lins :
Little of censure then had he pass'd on the work of the battle ;
Marking how many around him—of Troy and the sons of Achaia—
Grovell'd, stretch'd in the dust, and in carnage one by the other.

° Tied up in a knot on the top of their heads.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

Shows how Tydeus' son wounded Ares and Cytherèa.

THEN, in Tydides' breast did the virgin Pallas Athène
Breathe an immortal courage :—and give him to rank as the foremost
Of the Achaian host; that high honor might ever attend him.
She, on his crested helm, and the burnish'd orb of his buckler,
Lit a celestial splendor :—as Sirius rising from ocean,
In the autumnal sky, burns brighter than all in the heavens :—
So, on his head and breast, did she scatter the bright coruscations,
Urging him on, in the field, to the centre; where strife was the deepest.

There was a man of Troy, named Dares :—wealthy and blameless :
Priest of Hephæstus' shrine. Two sons had the elder; Idæus,
Phegeus too; both skilful in all appertaining to battle.
Breaking away from the throng, these dared to encounter the hero;
Borne by their steeds and car :—he on foot moved to battle against them.
Fiercely they both advanced; and when on the point of encounter,
Phegeus darted first his far-shadowing spear at his foeman :
But the unfaithful shaft pass'd over the warrior's shoulder,
Winging a harmless flight.—Then, in answer, the spear of Tydides
Flew, not in vain, from his arm: for it pierced thro' the breast of the Trojan,
Right between pap and pap :—and hurl'd him to earth from the chariot.
Down from the glittering car, with a leap, fled, in terror, Idæus;
Nor did he dare to remain, and to cover the corpse of his brother:
Nor had himself escaped, and his flight had but little avail'd him,

Had not Hephæstus' self roll'd clouds and darkness around him,
Saving the recreant son, lest the father's age should be childless.
Car and battle-steeds did the son of magnanimous Tydeus
Master, and give to his men; and they drove them afar to the galleys.
But when the ranks of Troy saw Dares' sons, one evading
Death by ignoble flight, and one lying slain on his war-steeds,
Sank all the heart in their breasts.—Then the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène,
Seizing his heavy hand, spake thus to the homicide Ares.

"Ares! Lover of carnage! Thou blood-stained breacher of bulwarks!
Shall we not leave them alone—these sons of Troy and Achaia—
Leave them to combat alone, and the issue of battle to great Zeus?
While we avoid yon field, and refrain from provoking his anger?"

Thus did the Goddess speak:—and the fierce God led from the combat:
Led him, and sat him down on the flowery bank of Scamander.
Then did the Danaan host turn Troy's unto flight:—and each leader
Slew some notable foe.—First, the King of men, Agamemnon,
Struck from his car of battle the great Halyzonian chieftain,
Hodius; as he was turning his steeds from the field:—and he struck him
Right 'mid the shoulder-blades:—and the spear drove out at his bosom.
Thund'ring he fell to the earth; and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.

Crete's great prince slew Phæstus, the son of Meonian Borus—
Tarnè's fertile vale was his home.—As he mounted his war-steeds,
Into his shoulder-blade did Idomeneus, skill'd as a spearman
Train'd to the use of the lance, strike the long stout spear, and impale him.
Down from the horses he fell, and darkness veil'd him for ever.
Soon were his blood-stain'd spoils in the hands of the valorous Cretans.

Then by the tough thorn-lance of Atreus' son, Menelaus,
Strophius' son was slaughter'd:—Scamandrius, perfect in woodcraft;
Notable hunter was he:—for the Goddess Artemis taught him

Skill in the forest chace, and to pierce the wild beasts of the woodlands:
Yet of the Huntress-Goddess the gifts but little avail'd him;
Little his skill with the shafts, and his long-won fame as an archer.
Him, as he fled from the fray, the redoubtable chief Menelaus,
Train'd to the use of the lance, struck full on the back with the jav'lin,
Fair 'mid the shoulder-blades: and the spear drove out at his bosom.
Headlong he roll'd in the dust; and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.

Merion overtook, and slew in the battle, Pherèclus;
Hæmon's son was the chief; he was son of a notable artist,
Skilful in craft of hand, and dearest to Pallas Athène.
He for the prince Alesander had fashion'd the frames of his galleys,
Fashion'd a cause of woe unto all of the race of the Trojans;
Cause too of woe to himself; for the voice of the Gods never reach'd him.
Him, as he fled from the fray, did Merion follow, and struck him,
Just as he overtook the pale fugitive, right on the buttock;
Driving the spear right through, 'neath the bone; tearing under the bladder.
Groaning he sank on his knees, and the darkness of death overwhelm'd him.

Meges slew in the battle Pedæus, son of Antènor;
Bastard son in sooth;—yet he dwelt with the sons of Theàno,
Cherish'd as one of themselves; such love did she bear to her husband.
Him, overtaken in flight, close-handed, the mighty Phyleides,
Just at the base of the skull, struck fair with the spear; and the weapon
Cut thro' bones, and tongue; and shatter'd the teeth of the Trojan.
Headlong he roll'd in the dust, and the cold steel bit in the death-pang.

Then was Hypsènor slain by Eurypylus, son of Evæmon.
Offspring renown'd was the chief of Dolòpion, priest of Scamander:
Priest, and mortal man; yet revered as a God by the people.
Him, as he fled from the fray, did Eurypylus, son of Evæmon,
Follow, in mortal chase:—and he closed on the Trojan, and smote him
Full on the arm; and the falchion the hand lopp'd off at the elbow.
Down fell the blood-stain'd hand unto earth; o'er the eyes of the owner

Floated the shades of death; and fate laid her finger upon him.

Such, of the Argive chiefs, were the deeds in the arduous combat.
But, from his place, 'twere vain to conjecture the friends of Tydides;
Whether his side in the battle were Troy or the ranks of Achaia.
Right o'er the field of fight did he sweep; like the burst of a torrent
Swollen beyond its banks, surging over the dykes that would bound it.
When, nor the well-built dykes on the banks are enough to restrain it;
Nor strong walls suffice; nor mounds that engirdle the orchards;
But in its sudden fury, the stream, swoll'n high by the rain-fall,
Sweeps far away the devices of baffled human invention.
So were the ranks of Troy by Tydides humbled in battle:
Nor would they stand him in fight;—but their troops broke, scatter'd before him.

Him, 'mid the routed ranks, when the notable son of Lycàon
Saw, as he swept through the battle, effacing the lines of the phalanx,
Right at the warrior's breast he a tough bow bent; and he struck him,
Charging in full career; on the hollow bend of the cuirass,
By the right shoulder-joint.—Sheer through went the furious arrow,
Out, on the further side:—and the blood trickled over the armor.
Far o'er the field of fight rang the shout of the son of Lycàon.

"Onward, ye sons of Troy!—Lay the lash to your thundering war-steeds!—
Well has my shaft been aimed!—It has stricken the best of Achaia!
Nor will he long endure that arrow's sting; if Apollo,
Even the son of Zeus, spake sooth when he urged me to battle."

Thus did the boaster speak; but the shaft did not master the hero.
Back he retired a space: and in front of his car and his war-steeds
Stood, and demanded aid from the son of the brave Capanèus.

"Quick! to mine aid, good friend! and descending at once from the chariot,

Draw, from my wounded shoulder, the bitter shaft of the foeman."

Thus spake the king: to the earth, leap'd Sthenelus straight from the war-car:
Stood by his chief, and drew out the keen shaft right through the shoulder[a].
Spirted the blood from the wound o'er the plates of the flexible cuirass.
Then, unto heaven in prayer, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Hear me, unconquer'd maid! Thou child of the Ægis-wielder!
If in the battle-strife thou'st e'er by myself,—by my father—
Stood as a guardian-God, yet again be propitious and hear me!
Let me but reach that man—at the spear-point let me but reach him—
Who, with his distant shaft, has stricken, and boasts to have slain me:
Boasts I shall cease, ere long, to behold the fair light of the sunshine."

Earnestly pray'd her chief: and his prayer reach'd Pallas Athène.
Hand and foot, thro' his limbs she diffused a celestial vigor:
Stood by the side of the hero, and rapidly thus she address'd him.

"Be of good heart, Diomèdes! nor fear to encounter the Trojan.
Lo! I have breathed in thy bosom thine own patrimonial courage—
Courage that knows not fear:—such as that of the shield-shaking Tydeus.
Also, of human sight, have I purged all mists from thine eyelids;
So, in the fight, thine eyes may distinguish men from Immortals.
Lest that, all unawares, should Gods descend to oppose thee,
Thou, but a mortal man, might'st strive with Immortals in battle.
Shun such unequal strife!—Yet if one—if the Queen Aphrodìte,—
Ventures to mingle in war, let the point of thy jav'lin reach her."

Thus did she speak; and, afar, to the skies, parted Pallas Athène.
Then did again in the van, 'mid the skirmishers, mingle Tydides.
Keen as he was heretofore to encounter the Trojans in battle,
Threefold now was his ardor for fight:—like the rage of a lion

[a] Of course the barbs would prevent its being drawn *back*.

Stricken, but not to the death, by the feeble spear of the shepherd,
Guarding the fleecy flock;—as he leaps o'er the wall of the sheepfold—
Only enraged by the wound: while shunning the useless encounter,
Shrinks to his cottage the swain, and abandons his charge to the spoiler:
Heaps upon heaps, do the terrified flock rush wildly together;
And the beast seizes its prey, and bounds off again to the forest:
Not less ardent for fight, upon Troy rush'd the brave Diomèdes.

Then did Astynous die, and Hypænor, shepherd of people.
One in the breast did he pierce with the brazen point of his jav'lin:
One on the collar-bone, with the ponderous blade of his broadsword,
Straight and full did he smite; and cleave through the neck and the shoulder.
These did he leave as they lay;—for Eurydamas' sons, Polyeides,
Abas too; well skill'd was the father in dreams of the dreamer:
Yet in the battle his knowledge but little avail'd to protect them:
Worsted in fight, they fell by the hand of the strong Diomèdes.
Xanthus he fought with next, and with Thoon:—children of Phænops;—
Sons of their father's age. Sad and dreary the fate of the elder,
Doom'd to a childless old-age,—no heir to his ample possessions.—
They were his only sons; and they died by the hand of Tydides;
Combating side by side.—Deep anguish, and weeping and wailing
Wait on their father's days; doom'd never to meet them returning
Safe from the field of the fight;—and his wealth is for those he begat not.

Chromius, Priam's son, sprung from Dardanus, next he encounter'd;
Borne in a single car, by the side of his brother Echémon.
E'en as a lion that bounding aloft breaks the neck of its quarry,
Singling out its prey from the herd in the depth of the forest,
So, the two brother-chiefs did Tydides, down from the chariot,
Dash, and in evil case;—and he tore from their shoulders the bright arms.
Chargers, and car, and spoils, did his followers drive to the galleys.

Him, when Æneas saw, thus wasting the ranks of the army,

Right through the thick of the fight, did he pass;—'mid the clash of the lances;—
Searching in every quarter for Pandarus, eager to find him.
Soon did the hero find the redoubtable son of Lycàon;
Stood in the warrior's front, and face to face thus he address'd him.

"Pandarus, where is thy bow?—Where the bitter shafts of thy quiver?
Where thine old renown?—None, here, draws arrow against thee;
Nor can a Lycian boast his skill above thine as an archer.
Up with thine hands unto Zeus!—and, then, wing a shaft at the foeman!
Him, whosoever he be, who harries and troubles the Trojans;
Scatters their closest ranks; and loosens the knees of their bravest.
Heaven, grant! only, it be not a God who is combating with us:—
Wroth at neglected altars!—Severe is celestial anger."—

Then, to the prince in reply, spake the notable son of Lycàon.

"Foremost, in council and field, of the well-mail'd ranks of the Trojans!
Judging by outward signs, our foe is the mighty Tydides.
His the device of the shield;—his the crest;—his the plume of the helmet;—
His are the battle-steeds.—Yet perchance it may be an Immortal.
If it be Tydeus' son, if it be but a man who afflicts us,
Not of himself he fights;—some God is in battle beside him:
One of immortal race, cloud-veil'd, ever near to protect him,
Turns, with unseen hand, each arrow away from his bosom.
I have directed already a shaft at the chief;—and I struck him
Fair on the shoulder-joint; and pierced through the bend of the cuirass.
I could have vow'd that the grave had been closing its portals upon him:
Yet he survives the assault.—Some God must be anger'd against us!—
Steeds and battle-car, I have none here to mount, if I wish'd it.
And yet eleven cars do I own, in the house of Lycàon;
Chariots fair to behold, newly-wrought, and with coverlets o'er them;
Standing in useless state;—and beside them, in pairs, are the war-steeds,
Ready for war; and they champ white grain and pulse in the mangers.

Often and long, in sooth, did the veteran soldier, Lycàon,
There, in his palace-home, ere I parted for battle, entreat me,
Urge me to mount my car, and to trust in the strength of my chargers;
And, as a warrior should, thus marshal the field for the Trojans.
But I obey'd him not:—'twere better, by far, had I done so!—
I was afraid for my horses:—lest they might be stinted of forage,
Here, 'mid the throng of troops;—for my steeds had been used to abundance.
Therefore I left them at home, and to Ilion march'd as a footman,
Trusting my bow and shafts.—Small, truly, the good they have done me!—
Two are the chiefs—high chiefs—their points have already encounter'd:—
Tydeus' and Atreus' sons.—I have aim'd at them both, and have hit them;
Hit them; and drawn their blood;—very blood[b]!—yet have only provoked them.
'Twas by an evil fate that I handled my bow and my arrows;
And, in reliance on them, upon foot at the head of my liegemen,
March'd to the plains of Troy.—And for Hector alone have I done it!—
But if I ever return, if mine eyes look again on my kindred,
Sire beloved, and spouse, and the high-roof'd walls of my palace;
Roll me my head in the dust!—let me die by the hand of a stranger!—
If I refrain to lay hold of, and shatter the profitless weapons;
Shatter, and burn to ashes!—They are but a snare and delusion!"

Roundly in answer, thus, spake the Dardan leader, Ænèas.
"Nay, do not threaten thus!—For, believe me, that day will arrive not,
Ere you and I, car-borne through the fight, and with chargers before us,
Cross this champion's path, and test him in sterner encounter!
Up then!—ascend my car!—Cast eyes on my chargers! observe them!
They are the breed of Tros[c]:—no steeds better train'd to the battle;
Train'd to advance in the terrible chace, or retreat from the combat.

[b] It is said that breastplates were sometimes coloured to represent blood: in order to hide the effect of wounds.

[c] That is, of the breed given by Zeus to Tros, as related *infrà*, v. 265. See the genealogy of Tros, *infrà*, Il. xx.

Safely with them in front can we fly, and escape to the town-wall,
If by the will of Zeus the advantage rest with Tydides.
Take then the scourge in hand, and the glittering reins, and direct them!
I will relinquish the car, and on foot wage combat against him.——
Or, take thou to the spear!—and mine be the care of the war-steeds!"

Then to the chief, in reply, spake the notable son of Lycàon.

"Thine be it, rather, to handle the reins, and to drive thine own war-steeds.
Better, if feeling the touch of a hand that they know, will the horses,
Carry the car from the field, if, perforce, we must flee from Tydides.
Lest that the frighten'd steeds, not hearing the voice of their master,
Prove unsteady in hand, nor, perchance, take us clear from the combat;
And, in his headlong fury, the son of the warrior Tydeus,
Slaying our hapless selves, drive the chargers away to the galleys.
So, let the care of the car be thine own, and to drive thine own horses!—
While, in his onward career, at the spear-point I will await him."

Thus did the warriors speak; and, speaking, ascended the chariot;
Lashing, eager for battle, the fiery steeds on Tydides.
But they were mark'd by the eye of thy valorous son, Capanèus!
Close by his monarch's side did he stand, and eagerly warn him.

"Dear to my inmost soul, son of Tydeus! great Diomèdes!
I can discern two chieftains, allied, rushing onward against thee,
Chieftains of force immense:—one, skill'd above all men in bow-craft,
Pandarus, valorous son of the notable hero Lycàon:
And his compeer in arms is Ænèas, son of Anchises,
Son of a hero-sire, and born of the Queen Aphrodìte.
Let us retreat with the steeds; nor thus, far in front of the vanguard,
Mix in the scatter'd fight!—Lest life pay the price of thy daring."

With stern glance, in reply, spake the valorous chief, Diomèdes.

"Counsel me not unto flight!—Such speech is unable to move me.
I have no gift, by birth, to behave in the fight as a skulker;
Nor to avoid hard blows; for my spirit is bold as it erst was.
I do not trust in my car, nor the strength of my steeds.—As you see me,
Thus will I meet yon foes; for my hope is in Pallas Athène.
Two are advancing to meet us.—Two, never again, shall their horses,
Carry away from the field; and perchance not one may escape us.
But this alone do I say—heed well the advice that I give thee!—
If in the coming struggle the Goddess award me the glory,
If I subdue both chiefs, fix here our steeds to the chariot,
Leave them apart by themselves, with the reins stretch'd tight to the car-rail!
Watching the moment, and spring, with all speed, on the steeds of Ænèas!
Seize them, and drive them away to the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia!
They are of that high blood, which the far-seeing Zeus, to compensate
Him for his lost Ganymede, gave, of old, unto Tros;—and their equals
Cannot be found on earth:—from the rise to the set of the Day-God.
Of this immortal race, did the king of men, Anchises,
Steal, by his mortal mares, a breed, all unknown to their master,—
Even to Laomedon.—Six foals did he rear in his palace,
Four he retains himself; as the care and the pride of his stables.
Two of the six he bestow'd on his valorous offspring, Ænèas.
Great, if we win them in fight, were the prize, and yet greater the glory!"

Thus, as the Argive chiefs held converse, one with the other,
Nearer, and nearer, the foe lash'd the fiery chargers against them;
And, first in word as in act, spake the notable son of Lycàon.

"Prince of undaunted soul! Brave son of the warrior Tydeus!
Thou'rt too strong for my shaft!—Thou endurest the brunt of mine arrow!
Now, in a closer strife, with my spear-point let me assay thee!"

Swift, as the Lycian spoke, flew the length of his lance at his foeman.

Fair and true did it strike on Tydides' buckler;—and through it
Hurried the furious spear;—just grazing the plates of the cuirass.
Loud o'er the field of fight rang the shout of the son of Lycàon.

"Ha! Thou'st felt it at last!—Thou'rt stricken right into thy body;
Stricken from breast to back!—Thine the doom; mine the triumph and glory!"

Calmly, and undismay'd, spake the valorous chief, Diomèdes.
"It was an ill-thrown lance!—Two to one as ye are, I bethink me
Scarcely ye'll end this fight, till one, at the least, unto Àres,
—Even the Warrior-God—pours blood as a grateful oblation!"

Speaking, he hurl'd his spear;—and the point, kept straight by Athène,
Struck between eye and nose; and clove through the teeth and the palate:
Cold and keen did the blade cut the tongue through the tip; till the spear-point,
Ending its bloody course, at the base of his chin saw the daylight[d].
Headlong he plunged from the car; and the glittering load of his armor,
Clash'd as he struck the earth.—Back, in fear, did the fiery chargers
Shrink from their master's corpse; as the fierce soul fled from the carcass.

[d] Commentators have been at a loss to discover how such a wound could be inflicted, especially as Pandarus was in a chariot and Diomed on foot. In the first place, it may be observed that, as the cars were very low, the difference of elevation was slight. Then—without relying too much upon the parabolic flight of missiles—it may be suggested that the natural impulse of one who, having thrown his own spear unsuccessfully, saw that he was threatened by the lance of his antagonist, and who (as was the case apparently with the combatants in the Trojan war) had no vizor to his helmet, would be to stoop his head forward, and to bring up his shield for the purpose of saving his face; and if he failed to do this effectually, and if the spear struck him between the rim of his shield and his helmet, a wound would easily be inflicted as described. The course of the spear downwards to the chin would be still more decided, if, as would probably be the case, the point grazed under and against the front of the helmet. The wound as described does not traverse any vital part; but it might probably prove immediately fatal, either by the sudden shock to the nervous system, or by suffocation, induced by hæmorrhage, and a spasmodic contraction of the muscles of the throat. At least so the Translator, who has no personal knowledge of such matters, is informed on medical authority.

Spear and shield in hand, sprang Ænèas in haste from the chariot;
Prompt to protect the corpse from the hands of the sons of Achaia.
Trusting his strength in fight, as a lion he circled around it;
Wielding his well-poised shield; with his spear far levell'd before him;
Shouting his cry of battle; alert for the life of the foeman
Who should attempt the dead.—But Tydides, stooping him earthward,
Grappled and heaved up a stone:—two men could barely sustain it,
Men, such as now exist;—yet he raised it, and easily wielded;
Wielded, and hurl'd at the foe; and it struck on the thigh of the Dardan,
High on the warrior's hip; where the thigh-bone enters the socket.
Tearing the skin right away, and, beneath it, stripping the tendons,
E'en to the joint of the hip came the great rough stone;—and the hero
Sank on his knees to the earth; and his hands, spread abroad, for an instant
Bore up his failing form;—and a dark night cover'd his eyelids.

And, then and there, had perish'd the king of men, Ænèas;
But his distress was seen by the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodìte;
Even his Goddess-mother, who bore him in love to Anchises.
Softly her white arms met in a radiant circle around him;
Softly arranging the folds of her glittering mantle before him,
Screening him safe from the darts; lest the spear of some venturous foeman
Piercing his shieldless breast might attain to the life of the hero.
And thus, guarded from ill, bore her son far away from the battle.

Nor, while this was done, did thy valorous son, Capanèus!
Slight, or fail to perform, the design of the brave Diomèdes.
First, as the king advised, far aside did he draw his own war-steeds,
Clear from the clash of arms[e]; and he rein'd them up tight to the car-rail.
Then rushing forward seized on the steeds of the Dardan, and driving
Far from the Trojan lines to the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia,
Unto Deipylus gave them, his loved and his trusty companion:
Dearest of all his peers; for their souls were welded together;

[e] This, and similar encounters, may be supposed to have occurred in a comparatively open space; and not among the general line of close combatants.

Bidding him drive to the ships; while himself, remounting his chariot,
Shaking the glittering reins o'er the backs of his thundering war-steeds
Urged them to speed, and re-enter'd the battle in search of Tydides;
Eager to aid his king.—He press'd in pursuit of the Goddess:
Knowing her want of strength; though immortal, yet far from the equal
Of those immortal Gods who lord it in combat of mortals;
Such as are Pallas Athènè, or Enyo, waster of cities;
So, rushing on thro' the throng in pursuit, the brave chief Diomèdes
Follow'd the feeble Goddess; and, pressing her flight, overtook her;
Charged, with protended lance, and her soft hand razed with the spear-point,
Grazing the palm.—Through the delicate skin drove the point of the weapon,
—Through the ambrosial veil, thro' the veil that was work'd by the Graces,—
Just on the swell of the palm.—Blood flow'd from the wound of the Goddess:
Ichor, blood of Immortals:—(for they, the great Gods, ever-blessèd,
Eat not the bread of men, nor quaff the dark juice of the wine-cup;
So, are they bloodless forms; in name, as in essence, Immortal).
Far, with a shriek of anguish, the Goddess her son from her bosom,
Cast to the earth:—but the chief was protected by Phœbus Apollo,
Veil'd in a dark-blue cloud:—lest the spear of some venturous Argive,
Piercing his shieldless breast, should attain to the life of the hero.
Loud, as the Goddess fled, rang the shout of the brave Diomèdes.

"Hence with thee, daughter of Zeus; from the war, and the mortal encounter!
Women, weak as they are, can the conquest of them not content thee?
Thou hast a taste of war!—Not in speed to the field, I bethink me,
Wilt thou be coming again; but shudder to hear of a battle."

Thus spake the king: from the battle, distracted with terror and anguish,
Hurried the wounded Goddess:—supported by wind-footed Iris
Clear of the press: pain-stricken, her right arm swollen and livid.
Soon, on the left of the fight, she arrived where the terrible Àres

Rested apart from the fray:—mist-veil'd were his spear and his war-steeds.—
Fainting, the Goddess sank on her knees, by the side of her brother;
Asking his help in her need, and his golden-caparison'd war-steeds.

"Pity me, brother beloved! and assist me, and lend me thy coursers;
So, I may fly to Olympus, the home of the happy Immortals;
Rack'd with pain as I am from a wound, which a man has inflicted,
Even Tydides' self:—his pride would encounter the Highest."

Thus did the Goddess speak: and Àres granted his war-steeds,
Tossing their golden frontlets.—In pain she ascended the chariot.
Iris stood by her side, and holding the reins of the chargers
Plied the immortal scourge; and the steeds flew eagerly onward.
Soon the abode of the Gods was attain'd, the high seat of Olympus.
Reining them up, till they stopp'd, then the Goddess, the wind-footed Iris,
Loosen'd the steeds from the car; and ambrosial fodder provided.
Then at her mother's knees, at Diòne's, the Queen Aphrodìte
Sank; and the mother folded her daughter close to her own breast;
Smooth'd her hand with her own, and call'd her by name and address'd her.

"Which of the heavenly host has dared thus, my child! to afflict thee?
Rash and evil deed!—As if *thou* wert, in sooth, an offender."

Then to her mother, thus, spake the wreather of smiles, Aphrodìte.

"Tydeus' son did the deed; the presumptuous prince Diomèdes.
Wounding me, only because I was saving my son from the battle;
Even mine offspring Ænèas; my son, whom I love above all men.
There is an end, it seems, of the strife 'twixt Troy and Achaia:
War has broken out by the Danai 'gainst the Immortals."

Fairest of heavenly race, thus replied to her daughter, Diòne.

"Grieved as thou art, O my daughter! contend with the pain, and endure it!

Oft, by the hand of man, have the Gods, who inhabit Olympus,
Heap'd foul scathe and scorn on the heads of their fellow-Immortals.
Àres suffer'd thus, when the strong Ephialtes and Otus,
Alceus' wonderful children, the God in the depths of the dungeon,
Bound with a brazen chain.—There he linger'd a month and a twelvemonth
Fetter'd: and there, perchance, would have perish'd the terrible Àres:
Had not his foster-mother, the beautiful Eëribæa,
Told of his state unto Hermes; who stole him away from his bondage,
Worn as he was with bonds; for the fetters were taming the War-God.
Hère suffer'd thus—when Amphitryon's powerful offspring
Sent from his mighty bow the three-prong'd arrow against her;—
In her immortal breast.—Wild anguish distracted the Goddess.
Hades suffer'd thus, great God as he is, when an arrow
Sent by the same fierce man, son of Zeus of the Ægis-wielder,
Wounded the God in Pylos, and taught him the pangs of the perish'd.
E'en to the home of Zeus, to the seat of the happy Olympus,
Rush'd up the wounded God, in his frenzy; the barb of the arrow
Rankling deep in his shoulder, the agony drove him to madness.
Pæon, tending the wound, laid drugs of healing upon it;
And he was cured at last; for the grave was not fated to hold him.
Frantic, violent man was his foe; reckless worker of evil:
Harassing thus with his arrows the Gods who inhabit Olympus.
He who has injured thee, was incited by Pallas Athène:
Fool as he is!—And forgetful of this is the mind of Tydides,—
Never the man lives long who engages in war with Immortals;
Nor will his ears hear the prattle of children, who greet his returning,
—Crowding his knees,—as he comes from the war and the mortal encounter.
And let Tydides think, though puissant he be in the combat,
Let him beware lest a mightier foe cross his path in the battle!
Lest the fair child of Adrastus, the beautiful Ægialeia,
Starting in shrieks from sleep, bring her terrified maidens around her;
Mourning the spouse of her girlhood, the bravest and best of Achaia;
Weeping the loss of her husband, the chivalrous chief Diomèdes."

Thus did the Goddess speak: and she wiped off the ichor with both hands;
Then was the wound assuaged, and the terrible pains were abated.

Nor was the tender scene unobserved by Athène and Hère.
Soon their sarcastic tongues were employ'd in molesting Cronïon;
And to her father, first, spake the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène.

"Zeus, father! wilt thou be wroth if I venture to tell thee a love-tale?—
Know! that the Cyprian Queen, while seducing some dame of Achaia,
Far from her home to elope—to the Trojan friends of the Goddess—
Urging the well-dress'd dame, and smoothing her waist by the waist-band,
Scratch'd her own delicate hand with the tongue of the buckle that bound it."

Thus did Athène speak; and the Father smilingly heard her:
Calling, he thus admonish'd, the golden Queen Aphrodìte.

"Not unto thee appertain, O my daughter, the deeds of the combat.
Softer strife is thine;—all the sweet contentions of lovers.—
Àres, terrible God, and Athène are rulers of battle."

Thus as, in heaven above, spake the Gods in converse together,
Fierce on his wounded foe charged the valorous chief Diomèdes;
Charged, though he knew that the hands of Apollo were gather'd around him:—
Little in awe of the God; but he dash'd up fiercely against him;
Eager to slaughter the Dardan, and strip from his shoulders the bright spoil.
Thrice did he rush to the charge, all eager to slaughter the Dardan;
Thrice, in the warrior's face, was the bright shield dash'd by Apollo.
But when, like to a God, he the fourth time rush'd to assail him,
Thus, with a terrible voice, spake the far-darting archer, Apollo.

"Back, son of Tydeus, back!—Oh be wise!—Deem not thou art the equal

Of the immortal Gods!—Vast, surely, the distance between them;
Them, the immortal Gods, and the earth-born issue of mortals!"

Such were the words of the God; and Tydides a little retreated,
Backward; avoiding the wrath of the bright far-darting Apollo.
Then by Apollo's hand was Ænèas, far from the combat,
Borne to the shrine of the God, within Pergamos.—There in the temple,
Artemis, Archress-Queen, and the Goddess, the fair-tress'd Leto,
Far in the inmost shrine restored him to vigor and glory.
Meanwhile an airy form, from Apollo was sent to the battle;
Like to the Dardan chief was the phantom in armor and features[f]:
Fiercely, around the pale spectre, the armies of Troy and Achaia,
Seeking each other's breasts with their weapons, in murderous conflict,
Hack'd into pieces the circular shields and the quivering bucklers.
Then to the fiery God, unto Àres, spake Phœbus Apollo.

"Àres! lover of carnage, thou blood-stained breacher of bulwarks!
Wilt thou not enter the field, and drive this man from the battle?
Even Tydides' self?—whose pride would encounter the Highest.
Cypris he first attack'd, and has wounded the hand of the Goddess;
Then he confronted myself; coming up, like a God, to assail me!"

Thus did Apollo speak; and on Pergamos waited the issue.
Àres the Trojan ranks then enter'd, and roused them to battle:
Acamas'[g] form he assumed, the redoubtable Thracian leader.
And to the children of Priam the king came the voice of the War-God.

"Princes of Priam's race, of the high-born king of the Trojans,
How much longer your people to die by the sons of Achaia,
Mean ye to leave? till the battle is raging in front of the town-gates?
One has been stricken to death, who is equally honor'd with Hector;

[f] The reader of Herodotus will recollect the account of the phantom warrior who fought in the Persian ranks at Marathon.

[g] Killed by Ajax in the beginning of Il. vi.

Mighty Æneas, the son of the high-minded hero, Anchises.
Make then an effort; and rescue your friend from the gulf of the battle!"

Thus did the War-God speak; and he roused up the souls of his hearers.
Then, in reproachful terms, spake to Hector the mighty Sarpedon.

"Hector! where is now that prowess thou formerly boastedst?
Vaunting thy city safe though deprived of the aid of her neighbours;
Kept by thyself alone, and the might of thy brothers and kinsmen?
None of these chiefs do I see; I can note not a man.—They are skulking,
Scared from the face of the foe, as the dogs from the face of a lion.
We,—though but here as allies,—bear the brunt and the heat of the battle.
I am myself but such.—I have marched from a wearisome distance;
E'en from Lycia's strand, by the eddying stream of the Xanthus;
There is my infant son; there too is the wife of my bosom:
There have I stores of wealth: all that which when absent is long'd for.
Yet I my Lycians head, and am ready myself to encounter
Foemen in single strife; though with nought to protect from the foeman:
Nothing is here of mine, for Achaia, if able, to plunder.
Thou, all the while, stand'st still; not even a word to thy soldiers;
No exhortation to war, no incentive to succor their comrades;
Lest, in the net of the fisher, as fish lie writhing and gasping,
Troy's proud sons at the last be a plunder and spoil to the foeman:
E'en to the foes whose anger will level the walls of thy stronghold.
Better, by far, to consider by night and by day, and determine
How by thy prayers to persuade those great chiefs aiding the Trojans,
Firmly to stand by thy side, and refrain, if they can, from reproaches."

Thus did Sarpedon speak; and his words stung the spirit of Hector.
Swift from his car of battle he leap'd to the earth in his armor;
Shaking his pointed spears; and he went through the whole of the army,
Rousing the sinking fight; and the strife burnt fierce at his presence.
Round came the flying troops, and stood firm facing the Argives;
And in their serried ranks, the Achaians waited the onset.

As on the threshing-floor, when the wind bears chaff from the corn-heap,
Fast 'neath the threshers' flails; at the season when yellow Demèter
Loosens, with gentle breezes, the grain from the husk in the ear-heads;
And in the deep white heaps rise the piles of the chaff;—on the Argives
Thus lay the thick white dust of the battle, the dust which the war-steeds
Trampled with restless hoofs from the earth to the orb of the heaven;
Meeting again in fight, round wheel'd by the hands of the drivers.
Then came the shock of hosts, and the field was enveloped in darkness;
Darkness that Àres spread o'er the field, as he aided the Trojans;
Ranging from side to side; thus working by mandate of Phœbus,
God of the golden falchion, Apollo, who urged him to battle
Thus in relief of Troy; for he noted Pallas Athène,
Leaving the field; who had stood as the guardian-God of the Argives.
Then did Apollo bring back the Dardan safe from his temple;
Post him again in fight, and infuse fresh courage within him.
Thus did Ænèas stand 'mid his followers; and they exulted
Seeing him back in the ranks, and alive and sound as he left them,
All good-hearted for war:—yet they ask'd not a question about it:
They had a weightier task on their hands, which the silvery archer
Wrought, with the homicide Àres, and Erys unsated of slaughter,
While on the Danaan side did Odysseus and Diomèdes
Rouse up the troops to the war, with the help of the mighty Ajaces.
Little did they fear the prowess of Troy, or her shouts for the onset.
Solid and dark they awaited the foe; as the masses of vapor
Form'd by the hand of Zeus, in a calm, on the peaks of a mountain,
Motionless all remain, while slumbers the blast of the tempest;
And all the winds are hush'd,—no gale, with its boisterous summons,
Shatters the dark heavy masses of cloud, and divides them asunder;
So in their serried ranks did the Danai wait for the Trojans:
And through the closing throng went Atrides; charging the people.

"Now play the man, my friends!—Give proof of your might and your valor!—
Let the example of each give his comrades new nerve for the combat!

They who thus vie to be first, are less perill'd in fight than the skulkers.
Dastards, who turn to fly, lose their lives and their honor together."

Speaking he hurl'd his spear, and he struck a high chief of the Trojans,
Pergasus' valiant offspring, Deicöon, friend of Ænèas.
Priam's children, themselves were honor'd no more by the people,
Ready as ever he was to be found in the front of the vanguard.
Him on the boss of the shield did the spear of the King Agamemnon,
Strike; and the shield gave way to the shock of the blow; and the jav'lin
Drove through his girdle of mail, implanted deep in his bowels.
Thund'ring he fell to the earth, and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.

Two of the Danaan chiefs then died by the arm of Ænèas,
Crethon; Orsilochus too; the redoubtable sons of Diòcles.
Long had their father dwelt in the well-built city of Pheræ,
Blest with plentiful wealth; and he traced his descent from the river,
Even the stream Alphèus, which flows thro' the Elian Pylos.
First from the River-God was Orsilochus, prince of the people;
Next from Orsilochus came the magnanimous chieftain Diòcles;
And from Diòcles sprang two twins in the course of succession,
Crethon, Orsilochus, train'd in whate'er pertaineth to battle.
They, having mounted the decks of their long dark ships, to the Troad,
Famous for beautiful steeds, 'mid the rest of the host of the Argives,
Came in Atrides' cause; in the cause of the King Agamemnon
And Menelaus.—Death came there prematurely upon them.

Even as lion-cubs, rear'd up in the clefts of a mountain
Long by their savage dam, 'mid the tangled depths of the forest,
Making a first assay on the herds, and the flocks of the shepherds,
Waste the inclosures round; but at last feel the spear of the hunter
Deep in their tawny breasts; and their lives pay the price of their daring;
So by the sword of the Dardan the twin chiefs, vanquished in combat,
Lay, side by side, on the field;—like pines overthrown by the tempest.—
Grieved at their fate was the soul of the valorous chief Menelaus;

Gleaming in shining armor he traversed the ranks of the vanguard,
Shaking his glittering weapon; and Ares hurried him onward;
Hoping to see him fall by the arm of the mighty Æneas.

But he was seen, in his need, by Antilochus, offspring of Nestor:
Onward he press'd to the front, apprehensive the shepherd of people
Suffering aught of ill omen, might render their toils unavailing.
He and the Dardan chief had already, eager for combat,
Met, with spears in hand; and paused, ere commencing the onslaught:
When to the side of the king sprang Antilochus, ready to aid him.
Stout as he was in battle, the Dardan shunn'd the encounter,
With two redoubtable chiefs, thus united in battle against him.
They their slaughter'd friends drew back to the ranks of Achaia;
Giving the hapless dead to the hands of their own companions;
Then turn'd back to the field, and re-enter'd in the fight with the vanguard.

Then did they vanquish the mighty Pylæmenes, rival of Ares;
Chief of his buckler'd ranks, of the stout Paphlagonian levies.
Under the collar-bone, the redoubtable chief Menelaus,
Train'd to the use of the lance, in close fight struck, and transfix'd him.
Mygdon, Atymnius' son, brave charioteer of the chieftain,
Died by the son of Nestor;—who, as he was wheeling the chargers,
Turning them round for flight—with a great stone shatter'd his elbow.
Down from the arm to the earth fell the glittering reins of the war-steeds:
And, with a bound and a blow, did Antilochus master his foeman,
Cleaving his temples through.—With a deep groan, down from the war-car
Headlong he plunged to the earth; and there, on his neck and his shoulders
Stood, for a while, erect; in the deep soft sand of the sea-shore:
Stood, till the rushing steeds struck the corpse far extended before them:
They by the son of Nestor were sent to the host of Achaia.

Hector their fate observed; and he dash'd thro' the ranks to avenge them;
Dash'd with his cry of battle; and round him the throng of the Trojans.

Àres marshall'd the van, and Enyo, terrible Goddess;
Ever along with her is remorseless tumult of battle.
Àres, shaking aloft the ponderous weight of his war-spear,
Moved now in front of Hector, now closed up the ranks of the rearward.

Well he the God[h] recognised; and he shudder'd, did brave Diomèdes.
As in the midst of a plain, when a peasant, bewilder'd in travel,
Suddenly reaches the bank of a mountain-stream, which to ocean
Sweeps in its foaming course, and he shrinks from the edge of the torrent;
So drew Tydides back; and thus did he speak to his people.

"Well may we marvel, friends, at the wonderful prowess of Hector:
Envy his skill with the spear; his might, and his daring in battle!
For not alone he fights: some God ever waits to defend him.
Àres' self this day, though in mortal form, is beside him.
Let us not fight with Gods!—Yield ground,—but still in retreating,
Firm let us face our foes;—still show bold front to the Trojan!"

E'en as the chieftain spoke, Troy's van came charging upon them
Hector, the first of the van, two warriors train'd to the combat
Slaughter'd, on one car mounted, Anchialus brave, and Menesthes.
Grieved at their fate was the soul of the great Telamonian Ajax:
Fiercely he strode to the front, and struck with his glittering jav'lin,
Amphius, Selagus' son.—All vain were his ample possessions,
Lands and dwellings in Præsus; for fate thus doom'd him to perish,
Bringing his useless aid unto Priam, the children of Priam.
Him, on his belt of mail, did the great Telamonian Ajax
Strike; and the long spear-blade went deep through the pit of his stomach:
Thunder'd his arms as he fell.—Then, fierce, the redoubtable Ajax
Sprang to despoil the dead.—But the Trojan darts fell around him;
Sharp and bright they fell, and they crowded the field of his buckler.
Pressing the corpse with his heel, from the body his weapon, the hero

[h] By the power bestowed on him by Athène, *suprà*, v. 127. He seems, however, to have soon lost the faculty: see his address to Glaucus, Il. vi, v. 128, *et seq.*

Slowly drew:—but to strip off the glittering arms from the carcass
Fail'd at the last; for sore was he press'd by the flight of the jav'lins.
Nor, did he mark unmoved, how the mailèd ranks of the spearmen,
E'en Troy's best and her bravest, with levell'd lances around him,
Closed, yet nearer and nearer:—till, stalwart and stout, they repell'd him,
Drove him away from the corpse:—and he came hard press'd from the contest.

Thus as the armies strove with each other in arduous combat,
Fate urged onward Tlepolemus, son of the mighty Heràcles,
Urged him to meet in fight with the godlike leader, Sarpedon.
Onward they both advanced: each now stood fronting the other,
Grandson, and son, of Zeus: of the great God, roller-of-storm-clouds.
First to break silence, thus spake Tlepolemus, taunting his foeman.

"Why to the field of fame does this Lycian, skill'd in haranguing,
Come, but to tremble in fight, and to prove himself new to the combat?
Surely, they speak but lies who from Zeus, from the Ægis-wielder,
Seek to derive thy race!—Great, surely, the distance that parts thee
From those sons of Zeus, who were known in the days of our fathers!
Oh! unto this son of Zeus, how unlike was the mighty Heràcles,
He, my own glorious father, high-minded and bold as a lion!
Once, for Laomedon's horses, he came to this land as a foeman:
Six were the hero's ships, and but scanty the band of his soldiers.
Yet did he plunder the town, leaving Ilion's streets to her widows.
Tame and unmoved thou remainest—thy people dying around thee—
Nor, if mightier far, would thyself and thy Lycian levies,
They and thou combined, be sufficient to succor the Trojans;
Doom'd, as thou art, by this arm to descend to the portals of Hades."

Then, in reply to the taunt, spake the valorous Lycian leader.

"True is it, Ilion's rampart was storm'd by the hero, thy father,
Wrong'd as he was by the king, by Laomedon's folly and madness.

Who, for his faithful service, repaid him with words of reviling;
Holding the horses back; those steeds he had journey'd so far for.
But, as for thee, destruction and death hover gloomily o'er thee;
Death from my own right-hand: thus tamed by the point of my jav'lin,
Mine is the fame of thy fate, and thy soul the possession of Hades."

Thus did Sarpedon speak.—All wroth at his words, his opponent
Hurl'd his strong ash spear.—Both spears were discharged at one instant,
From the two warriors' hands.—All straight in the throat of his foeman
Enter'd Sarpedon's weapon:—the point stood bloody beyond it:
And the dim night of death closed over the Rhodian's eyelids.
His lance struck, in return, on the Lycian's thigh; and the spear-point
Drove in its furious course through the muscles; and down to the thigh-bone
Pierced, just grazing the bone;—but his Father averted destruction.

Then, but in evil plight, from the battle his trusty attendants
Carried Sarpedon away; and the long lance, trailing behind him,
Harass'd the fainting chief:—none saw it, or thought to remove it;
Thought of extracting the spear from the wound;—in their haste they forgot it,
Eager to place him at once in his car; such confusion around them.
While, on the other side, did the well-mail'd sons of Achaia
Carry away from the battle Tlepolemus.—Godlike Odysseus,
Daring chief as he was, saw the scene, and was moved in his spirit.
Much did he doubt in his mind for an instant, and deeply debated,
Whether to press on the flight of the wounded son of the Storm-God,
Or let the Lycian troops with their own lives ransom their leader's.
But, great chief as he was, fate yielded it not, to Odysseus
Thus, with his spear, to subdue the redoubtable offspring of great Zeus.
So, on the Lycian host, was his fury turn'd by Athène.
Cœranus first he slaughter'd—then Chromius fell, and Alastor;
Alius, Prytanis too, and Alcander, and mighty Noèmon:
Nor had he then been stay'd, and more had sunk breathless around him,

Had not Hector himself, with his keen eye, noted the carnage;
And, through the foremost ranks, swept onward in glittering harness,
Scattering fear 'mid the ranks of the Danai:—joy at his presence,
Flutter'd Sarpedon's soul; yet in sorrowful words he address'd him.

"Leave me not here as a prey to the Danai, offspring of Priam!
Leave me not lying here!—But protect me, and let me my last breath
Draw, in thine own fair town!—For the far-off land of my fathers
Never may see me again; never more to my home returning
Shall I my child embrace, or the much-loved spouse of my bosom."

Thus spake the wounded chief. Great Hector, glancing his bright crest,
Spake not; but all in wrath, rush'd on to the fight; the Achaians
Eager to drive from the field, and to slaughter the foremost among them.
Then was Sarpedon borne farther off by his faithful attendants,
Borne to the tree of Zeus, to the shade of the beautiful oak-tree.
There, as he lay in the shade, did his loved and his gallant companion,
Pelagon, wrench from the thigh of his chieftain, the shaft of the long lance.
Fainted the king with the agony;—mists swept over his eye-balls:
Yet he again revived, as the fresh cool breath of the north-wind
Play'd o'er his gasping form, and recall'd him again to sensation.

Àres' self, and Hector, with bright crest gleaming before them,
Not, even then, to the fleet fled the serried ranks of the Argives;
Nor did they dare attack; but they kept ever sternly retreating:
Orderly fronting the foe; for Àres aided the Trojans.

Who fell first, who last, that day, over-match'd in the combat,
Fell by the might of Hector, when aided by terrible Àres?—
Teuthras, godlike chieftain, and then died his servant Orestes;
Trechus, the warrior-chief of Ætolia; then Enomàus;
Helenus, Œnops' son; and Oresbius girded in armor;
Blest was the chief with wealth, and he dwelt in the forest of Hylæ,

By the Cephìsĭan lake ; and around him, in peace and in plenty,
Dwelt Bœotia's sons, on the strong rich soil of their homesteads.

But when the eye of Hère, the white-arm'd Queen of Olympus,
Look'd on her Argives slain, in the heat of the arduous combat,
Thus to Athène she spake, and with wingèd words she address'd her.

"It is, alas! for nought, child of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder,
It is, alas! Atrytòne, in vain, that we gave Menelaus
Promise of Troy's town sack'd, as the end and reward of his labors ;
If thus, to rage in the battle, we suffer this terrible Àres.
Let us ourselves then arise ; and take part in the strife of the valiant!"

Thus did the Goddess speak ; and the blue-eyed virgin assented.
Hère array'd for the journey the golden-caparison'd chargers ;
Hère, daughter of Cronos, resplendent and beautiful Goddess.
Hèbe affix'd to the car bright wheels with their radiant circles,
Gleaming with brass and gold ; eight-spoked ; with the axle of iron :
Fashion'd of beaten gold were the circular fellies ; around them,
Glitter'd the brazen tires, well-fitted, a marvel to witness.
Round on each side of the car ran the circular naves, all of silver ;
Silver and gold were the work of the springs, and the straps that sustain'd it.
All in the front of the car, for the reins hung in silver the rein-hooks :
Solid silver the pole ; at the end of the pole were the breast-bands,
Plaited, of pliant gold :—and the Goddess herself, even Hère,
Led up the steeds to the pole ;—for her breast was alight for the combat.

Then did the virgin Athène, the child of the Ægis-wielder,
Suffer her robe to descend, from her breast to the floor of her Father ;
Robe of varied hues ; she herself had wrought and design'd it :
Put on her tunic of mail, and, arraying herself for the battle,
Wielded the horrid arms of her Father, the Lord of the storm-cloud :
Flung on her shoulders the orb of the terrible Ægis, resplendent
With its eternal fringe.—Fear sits, ever crown'd, on its surface ;

There too is strife; there is carnage in fight; there is fearful pursuing.
There dread Gorgon's head,—fell spoil of the horrible monster—
Glares, the portentous bearing of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder.
Then did she place on her temples the four-coned crest of the helmet:
Nor would a hundred hosts have sufficed for the radiant head-piece.
Then she ascended the car, flame-bright; and she handled the jav'lin;
Handled the great huge spear:—all before it the ranks of the heroes
Fall, as her Father's wrath burns hot in the breast of the Goddess.
Hère handled the lash, and the steeds flew impatient before it.
Flew the celestial gates for the car, all unbidden, asunder:
Gates where the Hours on watch,—fair sentinels guarding Olympus—
Now roll away thick clouds from the portal, now shroud it in darkness.
Right through the cloud-piled gates, at the touch of the goad, flew the chargers.
Then, all apart from the others, they came to the mighty Cronïon,
E'en on the loftiest peak of the deep-cloven crest of Olympus:
There did the white-arm'd Queen stop her car, and restraining her coursers,
Spake unto Zeus himself—to the Highest—and thus she address'd him.

"O Father Zeus, in thy bosom is no wrath threatening Ăres?
Not when so many and valiant, in vain, of the host of Achaia
Die, unprovoked, at his hand—in despite of myself?—and his aiders
—Cypris, queen of smiles, and the silvery archer Apollo—
They who have brought this pest and encourage him, smile at my trouble.
Tell me, O Father Zeus, will it anger thee now, if this Ăres,
Grievously stricken by me, were compell'd to retreat from the battle?"

Then, to the Queen, in reply, spake Zeus; great roller-of-storm-clouds.

"Go then,—set on his traces the virgin, Pallas Athène!
Well can she manage the God, and with agony tame him to mildness."

Thus spake the God, in reply—and his answer was noted by Hère.

Down on her steeds came the lash, and they eagerly bounded before her ;
Right, between earth's fair face, and the star-studded orb of the heavens,
Far as a man can see through the bright clear air of the morning,
From a high watch-tower's top, out-gazing afar over ocean ;
E'en so far at a bound flew the feet of the thund'ring chargers.
But when they came unto Troy, and the two twin streams of the Troad,
E'en where Simois runs combining his waves with Scamander,
There, on the river's bank, did the Goddess, reining her chargers,
Loosen their necks from the yoke :—roll'd mist and darkness around them.
Sprang from the River's margin ambrosial food at his bidding.

But, in the form of a dove, to the field went each terrible Goddess ;
Mild in form ; but with heart all aflame to bring aid to the Argives.
Soon did the twain arrive, where Achaia's best, and her bravest,
Stood, with serried ranks, by the valorous chief Diomèdes.
Stood, in unbroken might, like to lions delighting in carnage,
Or like to mountain-boars—with strength and with nerve unabated.
Near to the desperate band did the white-arm'd Queen of Olympus,
Stand, in the form of Stentor—of Stentor[i], whose voice, as a trumpet,
Rear'd its brazen sound, e'en fiftyfold, over the combat.

" Shame to ye, men of Argos—fair forms without spirit within them !
While on the field of fight might be seen the redoubted Achilleus,
Then did the Dardan gates never shake to the tread of a Trojan.
None dared leave those walls—for they dreaded the spear of the hero.
Now, far away from the city, the war rolls up to your galleys."

Thus did she speak ; and aroused all the courage and might of her hearers.
Then to the side of Tydides the blue-eyed Goddess Athène,
Sprang, and she found the king, by his battle-steeds and his war-car,
Cooling the heat of his wound ; where the Lycian arrow had struck him.

[i] It does not appear whether Stentor was a herald, or held any other official position by virtue of his voice. However, although only once mentioned, he has given a word to the English language.

For he was chafed with the heat and the sweat;—where the belt on his shoulder
Braced up his ample shield—and his arm it was weary with slaying.
So he had lifted the belt; and was wiping the blood from beneath it,
When by his horses' necks stood the Goddess, and thus she address'd him.

"Oh! how unlike his sire is the son that was gotten by Tydeus!
Tydeus, small in frame, was a notable hero in combat.
E'en when I held him back, nor would suffer his ardor for battle,
Nor his proud looks in the field, all apart from the rest of Achaia,
He, as a herald, went to the well-mann'd wall of the Thebans.
There did I urge him to peace, and to quietly feast at the banquet;
But, as it ever had been, his courage excited him onward;
Urged him to challenge the youth to the games—and in all he was victor;
Vanquish'd in all with ease—for I stood as a helper beside him.
Thee I am ever near:—I am ever at hand to defend thee;
Ever am urging thee on, to do battle with Troy for Achaia.
But, either strength has fail'd thee, and weariness fetters thy strong limbs;
Or, if a heartless fear be the only restraint, I pronounce then
No son of Tydeus, thou; of the valorous offspring of Œneus."

Then, in reply to the taunt, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Well do I know thy voice—child of Zeus—of the Ægis-wielder.
So will I freely reply, and will tell thee the cause that restrains me.
No fear is it that binds me;—no want of an ardor for battle:
It is thine own command:—and the word thou hast said, I obey it.
For thou hast warn'd me to brave not the blessèd Gods, the Immortals,
Should they oppose me in fight;—but if one, if the Queen Aphrodìte
Ventured to enter the field, with my keen spear-point to assail her.
Therefore, I, even myself, hold back from the strife; and the Argives
Have I advised to retreat—and to serry their ranks for protection.
For I discern, 'mid the foes, great Àres, ruling the battle."

Then, in reply to the chief, spake the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.

"O, true son of thy father, most dear to my soul—Diomèdes!
Dread not Àres' self—nor else of the race of Immortals,
Whom thou seest in the fight—I am there to assist and defend thee:
But on this Àres' self, turn the hoofs of thy thund'ring war-steeds.
Meet him in closest fight:—care nought for this terrible Àres,
Insane God as he is:—made for evil—and shifting to all sides.
Lately he gave his word, to myself and to Hère he gave it,
He would the Argives help—and would harass the ranks of the Trojans.
Now is he all for Troy, and his promise is past and forgotten."

Thus did the Goddess speak, and push'd with her hand from the chariot
Sthenelus down to the earth:—and he leaped down in haste at the signal.
And on the battle-car, side by side, went the great Diomèdes
And the impatient Goddess.—The solid beam of the axle
Groan'd with its mighty load;—great Goddess, and terrible hero.
Reins and scourge were seized by the virgin Pallas Athène;
And upon Àres' path she directed the thundering chargers.
Periphas, just at that moment, the valorous son of Ochèsus,
Best of Ætolia's sons, over-match'd in the combat by Àres,
Sank; and the God was stripping the arms of the slain.—Then Athène
Helm'd, with darkness, her head; lest Àres' eye should discern her.

So, when the murderous God saw the godlike chief Diomèdes,
Periphas there did he leave—far extended on earth as he struck him
Down in the mortal fray—and had taken the life of the hero;
And on Tydides charged straight onward, in haste to assail him.
Fiercely they both advanced; and when on the point of encounter
Right on the front of the car, did the God—o'er the reins of his chargers—
Point his protended weapon, and threaten the life of Tydides.
But with a touch of her hand did the blue-eyed Goddess Athène
Far from its destined course make the strong spear glance in an instant:

While, in return, at the foe did the valorous chief Diomèdes
Level his brazen spear.—It was guided by Pallas Athène
Straight to the loins of the God, where his armor was belted around him:
There came the point of the spear; and it tore thro' the skin and the muscles;
Till the king shorten'd his grasp, and recover'd the lance: mighty Àres
Roar'd with his brazen voice:—ten thousand heroes in battle
Would not surpass that sound, when shouting at once for the onset.
Fell on the hearts of all,—Troy's hosts, and the sons of Achaia,—
Wonder and mortal dread—at the cry of the God in his frenzy.

As amid summer's heat, when the dense mists, rolling together,
Form in a whirling cloud—as the wind blows in circular eddies—
So, in the face of Tydides, the valorous chief Diomèdes,
Rush'd up the wounded God in a cloud and a whirlwind to heaven.
Soon did he come to the home of the Gods and the lofty Olympus:
And by the side of Cronion—of Zeus—sat down in his anguish;
Show'd his immortal blood, as it flow'd where the weapon had pierced him;
And to the Father of all he protested in deep lamentation.

"Is there no wrath, O Zeus, with such deeds flagrant before thee?
Hard is the fate, in truth, that we Gods are for ever enduring:
When, to do grace unto man, we encounter the one with another.
Thou art the common foe:—as the father to one who destroys us;
Turn'd as she is in her mind—an unceasing contriver of mischief.—
All of the rest of the Gods, who inhabit the home of Olympus,
Pay thee observance due—and we all have been taught to obey thee.
Only this daughter of thine, not in word nor in act thou restrainest;
Giving her madness rein:—for the nuisance has thee for a father.
Now has the offspring of Tydeus, the arrogant chief Diomèdes,
Dared, and at her instigation, to combat the Gods, the Immortals.
Cypris he first attack'd, and he wounded her hand with his weapon:
Then he confronted myself—coming up like a God to assail me.

I have escaped, as I could, by the speed of my feet—or had perish'd,
Smother'd on yonder plain, 'neath the horrible piles of the corpses :
Or, though unable to die, yet enduring the pangs of destruction."

Then, with an high stern look, spake the cloud-compeller, in answer.

" None of this whining to me, thou detestable shifter on all sides !
Hatefullest art thou to me, amid all the high Gods of Olympus.
All thy joy is in war, and in strife, and in tumult of battle.
Thou hast thy mother's temper—perverse and intractable ever :
Thou art Hère's own ;—for with words can I scarcely restrain her.
Even thy present woes are the fruit of thy mother's designing.
Yet will I leave thee not thus to suffer the pangs thou endurest :
For, perverse as thou art, thou art mine ; and my spouse is thy mother.
Were it another God who is cursed with so fatal an offspring,
Long before this had thy place been with Uranus' issue[k]—and lower."

Thus did the Father speak, and commanded Pæon to heal him.
Pæon, dressing the wound, pour'd drugs of healing upon it ;
And it was heal'd :—for in nought was he framed as a perishing mortal.
E'en as the fig-tree juice[l], when pour'd and stirr'd in the milk-pail,
Curdles the liquid mass, as the bucket is whirl'd by a rustic ;
So, and as soon, was the wound heal'd up of the terrible Àres.
Hèbe bathing the God, put his glittering raiment upon him :
And, with his strength renovated, he sat by the side of Cronïon.

So to the home of Zeus, rose again, from the field of the combat,
Argive Hère, and she the Alalcomenæan Athène,
Àres, blood-stain'd God, having stay'd in his murderous onset.

[k] The Titans.
[l] Used instead of rennet.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

Tells of their converse sweet, and Andromachè's parting from Hector.

RAGED, without aid of the Gods, then the battle of Troy with Achaia.
Backwards and forwards the wavering combat inclined; as the armies
Bore, with protended spears, now here, now there, on each other:
All between Simois' banks, and the golden stream of the Xanthus[a].

First then, Achaia's bulwark, the great Telamonian Ajax,
Broke thro' the ranks of Troy, and let in light for his comrades;
Striking a chief to the dust, whom Thracia own'd as her bravest;
Acamas[b], stalwart and stout; the redoubtable son of Eusorus:
Striking him, full on the helm, where the crest shed its pendulous horsehair,
Over the warrior's brows,—the brazen point of the war-spear
Shatter'd the frontal bone:—night veiling his eyelids for ever.

Then was Axylus slain by the valorous chief Diomèdes;
Teuthras' gallant son: and he dwelt by the wall of Arisba;
Blest with plenteous wealth—and beneficent, too, in his plenty:
He was the friend of man, and his door it was open to all men.
But, of all those he befriended, not one in the day of his danger
Stood 'twixt him and death[c]: and he died in the battle unaided.

[a] The reader must not confuse this Xanthus, which is another name for the Scamander, with the Lycian river of the same name.

[b] Whose likeness had just before been assumed by Arès.

[c] Homer does not intend this, as Pope and others have supposed, as a satire on human ingratitude. It is merely mentioned, as a circumstance to excite commiseration,

And, by his master's side, fell Calèsius, guiding his war-steeds :
Master and charioteer, took one dark journey together.

Then, did Opheltius fall, by Euryalus slaughter'd, with Dresus ;
Pedasus then did he slay, and Esèpus—sons of the Naiad[d]—
Sons of Bucòleon brave, by the beautiful Abrabarèa.
He was the eldest son of Laomedon, notable monarch ;
Eldest son by birth, but not born to his mother in wedlock.
Meeting the nymph 'mid his sheep, there he wedded her, hard by the sheep-folds.
Twins did she bear to the prince :—boy twins ; bright in beauty and courage.
But the fair limbs were nought, and the valor was all unavailing ;
Slain by Mecisteus' son, their arms were the spoil of the victor.
Next was Astyalus slain by the warrior-chief Polypœtes ;
Pidytes, born at Percotè, was vanquish'd by mighty Odysseus,
Pierced by his brazen spear ; and Arètaon perish'd by Teucer ;
Then was Ablèrus slain by Antilochus, offspring of Nestor :
Elătus fell by the arm of the King of men, Agamemnon,
Pedasus gave him a home, by the banks of the Satnian river :
Phylacus fled, but in vain, to escape from the weapon of Leitus :
Mighty Melanthius died by Eurypylus, son of Evæmon.

Then did Adrastus fall, as a prey, to the King Menelaus ;
Fall as a living prey :—for his steeds, ran madly in terror,
Over the plain, on a tamarisk dashing his car ; and the horses,
Breaking the pole short off, rush'd wildly away to the city ;
Over the well-known road, now crowded with troops of the flying :
While he himself, by the shock, thrown aslant by the wheel of the chariot,
Grovelled, with face in the dust :—when, above him, the glittering jav'lin
Glimmer'd of Atreus' son, of the notable chief Menelaus.
Then did Adrastus encircle his knees, and thus humbly beseech him.

that no one of those, whom gratitude would have excited to assist Axylus, chanced to be at hand to defend him.—TROLLOPE.

[d] Or a water-nymph.

"O son of Atreus, spare me!—Receive the rich price of the ransom!
For, in the house of my father, the treasure is heap'd in abundance;
Brass, and gleaming gold, and steel well wrought by the artist.
These will my father give; he will proffer a bountiful ransom;
Soon as he hears that his son lives a slave in the fleet of Achaia."

Thus did the Trojan plead; and the mind of his captor relented:
He was preparing to send him away to the ships of Achaia,
In his attendants' charge:—when his brother, the King Agamemnon,
Came up with hasty strides, and thus did he speak and reprove him.

"Whence, O ye Gods, Menelaus, this new-born tenderness in you
For this accursed race?—They, in sooth, have bravely demean'd them
For thy domestic peace!—No, my brother! none shall escape us:
None shall avert his doom!—Not the babe in the womb of his mother.
All shall perish together; the whole of the race of the Trojans:
Nor shall a trace remain, nor a stone mark the graves of the guilty."

Thus did the monarch speak;—and to all the stern rigor of justice
Turn his brother's mind[e].—He rejected the kneeling Adrastus:
Thrust him away from his feet:—and the monarch, the King Agamemnon,

[e] It is not unusual to stigmatize the slaughter of Adrastus as an act of extreme ferocity and barbarism. But, without insisting on the manners of the times, it must be remembered that the Trojans had not only violated a truce which they had sworn to observe amid all the solemnities of their religion, but had treacherously attempted to assassinate the conqueror of their defeated champion. Under parallel circumstances it may be doubted whether even at the present day much quarter would be given in the heat of action. And the wonder perhaps is not so much that Agamemnon should be represented as putting Adrastus to death, as that Menelaus, the chief and immediate sufferer from the perfidy of the Trojans, should be willing to spare him. Even the language of Agamemnon in respect of the Trojan people generally, terrible as it is in itself, is not so terrible as are the imprecations which they had called down upon themselves in the event of their violating the treaty. (See Il. iii, v. 300.) The expression of Homer is that Agamemnon spoke what was "just and proper." It may be collected from numerous passages in the Iliad that it had hitherto been the common practice of the war to admit prisoners to ransom.

Stabb'd him deep in his side :—so he roll'd on his back ;—and Atrides
Pressing his chest with his heel, tore the weapon away from the carcass.

Nestor beheld the deed, and shouted aloud to the Argives.

" Valiant Danaan friends ! brave heroes ! servants of Ares !
Let not a man in the ranks, too greedy for spoils of the foemen,
Linger to plunder the dead, and to carry the spoil to the galleys !
First let us slay our foes. When the victory's won, we can spoil them :
Range 'mid the piles of slain ; and select their plunder at leisure."

Thus spake the king ; and aroused all the courage and soul of his hearers.
Then had the ranks of Troy, hard pressed by the martial Achaians,
Entered the Ilian wall, with spirits humbled and broken ;
Had not Priam's son, seer Helenus, best of diviners,
Stood by the side of Ænèas and Hector ;—and thus he addressed them.

" Hector, Ænèas too !—upon you is the charge of the people ;
Troy's and Lycia's sons.—You stand as the foremost among us ;
First in each high emprise ;—be it work for the field or the council.
Here let us turn and stand !—here serried in front of the ramparts,
Here let us traverse the ranks :—ere the soldiers leaving the combat,
Fly to the arms of their wives—and their glory be left to the foemen.
When you have traversed the host, and have roused up the spirit within them,
We will the fight maintain with the Danai :—never retreating
Though we be hardly pressed ;—strong danger impels us to action.
Thou then, Hector ! thyself must enter the town[f] :—and our mother,
—Thine own mother and mine—bid her marshal the dames of the Trojans

[f] One may reasonably wonder why the commander-in-chief, who does not appear to have taken any part in the consequent services, should have departed upon an errand which apparently might have been as well discharged by some far less important personage. The message must be considered as introductory and subservient to the well-known episode at the end of the book.

Unto Athène's fane;—to her shrine in the heights of the city.
Let her at once unlocking the doors of the cell of the temple,
Choosing with care that robe which within is the richest and largest,
Fairest of all in the palace—most choice in her chamber of treasures—
Let her expand it there, on the knees of the virgin Athène.
And to the Goddess vow twelve heifers, slain on her altars;
Heifers of yearling growth.—That so she may pity and spare us;
Pity the Trojan town—our wives and innocent offspring.
So from the Ilian wall may she keep off the offspring of Tydeus,
Savage chief as he is in the battle, and terrible hero;
Bravest by far, to my mind, of the whole of the sons of Achaia.
Great as Achilles was, not thus did we tremble before him;
Goddess-born as the chief is reputed to be—but Tydides
Rages like one possess'd; no mortal mates him in prowess."

Thus did the prophet speak—his advice was adopted by Hector.
Clad in his shining mail, he to earth leap'd down from his war-car,
Shaking his glittering spears; and he traversed the whole of the army
Urging his men to the fight;—and the battle rekindled before him.
Backward they wheel'd on the foes—and stood firm, facing Achaia.
Argos paused in attack;—and her sons stayed hands from the slaughter:
For from the starry skies, they affirmed, that a God had descended[g]
Bringing assistance to Troy—whom they saw wheel back to the onset.
Then, with voice heard afar, cried Hector to all of his armies.

"Trojans! and stout allies! who have marched from a distance to aid us!
Quit ye like men, brave friends! and remember your former achievements!
I for awhile go hence unto Ilium's wall to admonish,
Elders alike, of the state, and the well-loved wives of our bosoms,
Urge them to pray to the Deities; hecatombs vowing before them."

[g] The reader is referred to Mr. Gladstone's remarks (vol. iii. p. 559) upon the manner in which Homer throughout the poem keeps up the idea of superior prowess on the part of Hector, although he is in reality foiled by every first-class Achaian with whom he is brought into opposition.

Speaking thus, from the field went Hector, glancing his bright crest:
Loudly the black bull's hide on the neck of the chief, and his ankles,
Struck, as he bounded;—the hide at the rim of his circular buckler[h].

Glaucus—Hippolochus' son—and the valorous offspring of Tydeus,
Moved in the midst of the armies to combat one with the other.
Fiercely they both advanced, and now were at point of encounter,
When, ere a blow was struck, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Boldest of mortal men, what name may I venture to give thee?
Never, before this day, has thy form in the glorious combat
Met these eyes;—though now, thus far in advance of thy fellows,
Thou hast outdared them all, in awaiting the stroke of my jav'lin.
Hapless the sire whose son our path dares cross in the battle!
But, if no mortal man,—if a God, thou descendest from heaven,
Know, that I dare no more to encounter the blessed Immortals[i].
Neither was he long-lived, son of Dryas, the mighty Lycurgus,
When, with the heavenly Gods, he had ventured on impious contest:
He, in his frenzy, assail'd Dionỳsus' nurses, and drove them
From the Nysæan grove:—and they hastily flying before him
Dropp'd on the earth their thyrsi:—in fear of the bloody Lycurgus,
Pressing their flight with his goad:—Dionỳsus, quaking in terror,
Plunged 'neath the ocean-wave:—but the bosom of Thetis received him,
Shaking with fear:—for the threats of the man shook his limbs as an ague.
But he, for this, was plagued by the Gods, who are happy for all time:
And he was blinded by Zeus;—and the length of his days was prolonged not;
When he had thus, as his foes, all the race of the mighty Immortals.
Neither will I yet again meet blessèd Immortals in battle.
Yet, if thou art but a mortal, thy sustenance food that is earthly,
Onward a pace!—'Twill thence be a readier step to destruction!"

[h] The shield must have been nearly five feet in diameter.

[i] Diomed had apparently lost the gift bestowed upon him by Athène in the 5th Il. of distinguishing the Gods from men.

Then did the gallant son of Hippolochus answer Tydides.

" Wherefore, Tydeus' son! thus ask of the race that I spring from?
Such are the races of man as the growth of the leaves of the forest;
Scattered, to-day, by the breeze; while, to-morrow, a fresh generation
Bursts from the swelling spray;—as the spring comes in swift revolution.
Races of men, thus they flourish awhile, and then fade into nothing.
But, if thou wishest to learn who I am, and of whom a descendant,
List to the tale of a race, that is known far and wide among mortals.

" Ephyre lies deep-bosom'd, in Argos, renown'd for her chargers;
Sisyphus ruled in the city:—the craftiest ruler of mortals;
Sisyphus, Eolus' offspring; and he was the father of Glaucus;
Glaucus begat, in succession, the notable Bellerophontes.
He, by the gift of the Gods, shone in beauty and vigor of manhood;
Yet he incurr'd, unoffending, the deadliest anger of Prœtus,
Who—for the king was first, and the mightiest far of the Argives,
Wielding the sceptre from Zeus—from his own home drove him to exile.
For he was loved by Anteia—the beautiful wife of the monarch;
Loved, and tempted to sin:—but the wiles of the temptress avail'd not,
Moved not the steadfast mind or the virtue of Bellerophontes.
Then unto Prœtus, the king, came the woman with lying inventions;
'Prœtus! thou'rt but lost, if thou slaughter not Bellerophontes;
For he has sought my love—and e'en offered violence to me.'
Thus did the wanton speak: and the king roused fiercely to anger.
Yet did he slay him not—for his mind felt a scruple to do it.
But to the Lycian land he despatch'd him, with terrible tokens,
Tablets of doom; with a message of death deep graven upon them,
Sent to his own wife's father;—to make more sure of the victim.
Lycia, therefore, he sought; with divine protection to guide him;
And when he reach'd her shore, and the wandering stream of the Xanthus,
Well was the chieftain received, well treated by Lycia's monarch.
Nine days long did they feast; each day died a steer on the altars.
But, when the tenth fair dawn had appear'd, with her fingers of roses,

Then did he question the youth, and demanded to look at the token—
That—whatsoever it was—which he bore as credentials from Prœtus.
Then were the tablets shown:—then were open'd the missives of evil.—
First he was order'd to meet the invincible monster, Chimèra;
Meet and slay:—it was born of the Gods—not the offspring of mortals;
Lion in front, and a dragon behind, and a goat in the middle:
Belching, from deepest throat, thick clouds of a fiery vapor:
Yet—for he trusted the Gods—he encounter'd the pest, and destroyed her.—
Then, after that, did he vanquish the Solymi—mighty in combat:
Used as he was to strife, this fight was his sternest encounter.
Thirdly he fought and he slaughter'd the Amazons; women, but menlike.
As he return'd, by the king was a new snare framed to destroy him;
Who, from the Lycian realm, having chosen the best and the bravest,
Placed them in ambush to meet him:—they never return'd to their own homes;
All of them died in their treason:—all slaughter'd by Bellerophontes.
Then did the king confess that the hero's birth was a God's work;
And he retain'd him there; and he gave him his daughter in marriage:
Gave him the half of his realm: and the half of his rule as a monarch.
And an estate right fair did the Lycians give to the chieftain,
Vineyards, and fields of corn;—as his own to possess and enjoy them.
Children three were begotten by notable Bellerophontes;
Gallant Isander first, and Hippolochus; Laodameia
Last; who became, for her beauty, the earth-born consort of great Zeus;
And by the God was begotten the great, high-crested, Sarpedon.
But upon Bellerophontes in turn look'd the Gods in their anger.
O'er the Aloan plain, he was driven afar from his own home,
Shunning the haunts of men; with his soul self-consuming within him.
Ares, pest of war, slew the chieftain's first-born Isander;
Slew him, in mortal strife with the Solymi—mighty in combat.
Artemis, golden-rein'd, in her wrath slaughter'd Laodameia.
I am the son of Hippolochus—him do I boast as my father:
He to the Troad sent me—and often and long he besought me
Ever to strive to be first; and in valor surpass my retainers;

Nor on my father's race bring shame; for they rank'd as the bravest
In their Ephyrian home, and their Lycian land of adoption.—
Such are the race and the blood, from which I boast me descended."

Thus did he speak; joy enter'd the soul of the brave Diomèdes.
Firmly he struck his spear, upright in the verdure before him,
While, and with accents mild, he replied to the shepherd of people.

"Friends are we then by birth.—My guest art thou, as his offspring.
Œneus, my father's sire, was host unto Bellerophontes:
Kept him a guest in his palace, for twice ten days he detain'd him:
And when he parted at last, rich presents betoken'd their friendship.
Œneus a broad belt gave, upon his part, gleaming with purple:
Bellerophontes a cup, double-volumed—gold was the goblet:
This, when I came to the war, did I leave in my palace behind me.
Tydeus I cannot recall:—for he left me when only an infant:
Bound for the Theban wall:—death-place of the sons of Achaia.
So, I am host unto thee, shouldst thou ever sojourn in Argos.
Thou, in the Lycian land, art mine; should I ever arrive there.
Far from each other's breasts our spears must turn in the combat.
Trojans, and aids of the Trojan, shall perish in plenty before me,
Perish, by aid of the Gods—overtaken and slaughter'd in battle.
Thou, of Achaia's sons, shalt slay, it may be, an abundance.
Then let us change our arms:—that all may know who behold it,
Know that our sires were friends, and the sons inherit the friendship!"

Thus did the warriors speak—and descending to earth from the war-cars,
Clasp'd each other's hands, and interchang'd pledges of friendship.
Then did Zeus take away from Glaucus, sense and discernment;
Giving his arms in exchange for the arms of the brave Diomèdes:
Gold[k] for brazen arms;—for nine steers' value, a hundred.

Hector the while arrived at the Scæan gates, and the oak-trees.

[k] That is, plated or inlaid with gold: not solid gold.

Round him, in troops, came the women of Troy; wives, and terrified daughters;
Asking for news of their sons, of their brothers, and lovers, and husbands.
Nought could he tell in reply:—but he bade them pray for protection
To the immortal Gods:—and he left hearts aching behind him.

When he arrived where of Priam, the King, was the beautiful dwelling,
Bright with the high polished porches in front of the palace—around it,
All on the sides of the court were fifty fair chambers of marble,
Close and compact they stood; and in these did the children of Priam,
Even the sons of the King, sleep in state with their spouses beside them;
And, on the other side, in the innermost court of the palace
Stood, for his daughters fair, twelve high-roof'd chambers of marble;
Close and compact they stood; there the chiefs who had wedded his daughters,
Sons-in-law of the King, slept in state with their spouses beside them—
There came his mother-queen; all benevolent, eager to meet him;
With her Laòdice fair, of her daughters the brightest in beauty.
Then did she take his hand, and call him by name and address him.

"Why is my son thus here—far away from the toils of the battle?
Is it that Troy gives ground?—That these hateful sons of Achaia
Raging around our ramparts are pressing the host?—and induce thee
Here, from the height of the city, to raise thine hands to the Highest?
Wait but an instant here, for the luscious juice of the wine-cup,
Thou pour forth a libation to Zeus and the other Immortals
First; and then for thyself drink that which will cheer and refresh thee.
Great is the strength wine gives to a man, over-worn by exertion;
Wearied as thou art now; in thy toil undertaken for others."

Then, to the queen, in reply, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.
"Nay, mother, not for myself!—Bring no sweet draught of the wine-cup;
Lest it my limbs unnerve, and my mind and my courage be clouded.
Nor, with these unwash'd hands, unto Zeus dare I pour a libation.

Not to the God who is throned amid clouds and in darkness—Cronïon—
Ought one, polluted with carnage and gore, to prefer a petition[1].
But go thou to the fane of the Goddess, the great Agelaia!
Go in the midst of the matrons of Troy; and with costly oblations.
And having chosen with care that robe which is richest and largest,
Fairest of all in the house, most valued 'mid all of the treasures,
Spread it, a gift, on the knees of the virgin Pallas Athène!
And to the Goddess vow twelve heifers slain on her altars;
Heifers of yearling growth:—if perchance she may pity and spare us:
Pity the Trojan town, our wives, and innocent offspring.
So from the sacred wall, may she keep off the mighty Tydides,
Savage chief as he is in the battle, and terrible hero.
Go thou then to the fane of Athène, the great Agelaia!
I am in search of Paris, to speak and arouse him to action:
If he will hear what I say.—Would Heaven! that earth, to devour him,
Stretch'd her open jaws!—The Olympian sent him among us
But as a curse to Troy, and to Priam, and Priam's descendants.
Could I but see him dead!—Could I see him descending to Hades,
Then would my soul rejoice and revive from its utter dejection."

Thus did the hero speak—and his mother return'd to the palace;
Gave her attendants word: they collected the dames of the Trojans.
While she, herself, went up to her odorous chamber of treasures:
There were the glittering robes; rich work of Sidonian damsels:
Damsels, part of the spoil which the beautiful chief Alesander,
Brought from Zidon's shore, in his voyage o'er the waste of the ocean;
Sailing with Helen away, fair child of illustrious fathers.
Hecuba chose out the fairest of these, as a gift to Athène;
Largest of all in size, with designs work'd fairest upon it;
Shining bright as a star; last down, as the choicest among them.
Then did she go to the fane—Troy's matrons crowding around her.

[1] "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight."—1 Chron. xxii. 8.

When at Athène's fane they arrived, in the height of the city,
Then were the gates unclosed by Theàno, daintily-featured;
Cisseus' child; fair spouse of Antènor, tamer of war-steeds;
Priestess, by vote of Troy, of the fane of the Goddess Athène.
Then to Athène, voices were raised in deep lamentation[m]:
Then was the robe outspread by Theàno, daintily-featured,
Spread as a gift on the knees of the Goddess: and thus did the priestess
Offer up prayers to the maid; to the child of the Ægis-wielder.

"Hear us, O mighty Athène! protectress, terrible Goddess!
Break thou Tydides' spear! let him perish in sight of the ramparts;
Die, with his face in the dust, by the Scæan gates of the city!
And, when the deed is done, twelve heifers die on thine altars;
Heifers of yearling growth:—so perchance thou'lt pity and spare us;
Pity the Trojan town, our wives and innocent offspring."

Thus did she pray—but the prayer was rejected by Pallas Athène.
Thus did they vow, in vain, to the child of the Ægis-wielder.

Hector, the while, was gone to the house of the prince Alesander.
Fair was the house, he had built it, collecting artists together,
All in the plain of Troy best skill'd in the craft of the workman.
Chambers for night and for day, and a court in the centre, were found there;
Built on the city's height—by the dwellings of Hector and Priam[n].
There did he enter in; loved by Zeus.—In the grasp of the chieftain
Quiver'd his gleaming lance: ten cubits and one was the weapon,
Topp'd with a brazen blade:—and a gold ring circled the spear-head.

[m] The peculiar structure of this line, consisting of a triple dactyl and spondee, exists in the original: and seems to suggest the wail of the Trojan women.

[n] Hector evidently had the military command of the city; but there seems to be reason to suppose that he was younger than Paris; and that the latter was the eldest son of Priam and heir-apparent to the throne. Upon any other supposition it can scarcely be conceived that his insolent refusal, as related in the 7th Il., to restore Helen at the request of the Council, would have been tolerated.

Paris he found in the house, in his bed-chamber, cleaning his armor;
Buckler and glittering mail, and bringing his bow to a polish.
Argive Helen, the while, in the midst of her female attendants,
Sat, and the work of the loom apportion'd around to her maidens.
Hector regarded the chief, and bitterly thus he reproach'd him.

"Surely, it is not well, thus to nourish the bile in thy bosom[o] !—
Under the wall of the town is the battle.—And there are the people
Dying in heaps.—*Thou* alone art the cause of the war and the war-shout.
Only for *thee* they encircle the walls.—You would fall on another
If you beheld him thus holding back from the perils of battle.
Up and be doing then !—ere the town sinks blazing about thee !"

Then, to his brother, replied Paris, beautiful as an Immortal.

"Hector, thy words are just, thy reproof is not sharper than justice:
Therefore I deign to speak:—and believe me, and hear what I utter.
No hate was it to Troy, that detain'd me thus here in my chamber;
It was a warrior's grief, and anguish of soul that retain'd me.
And, even now, has my wife been attempting with words of persuasion,
Trying to send me again to the field:—and I know it should be so:—
Know it is best !—And success ever shifts now to this, now to that side.
Tarry thou here, and await till I arm me again for the battle;
Or in advance go thou; I will follow and soon overtake thee."

Thus did the prince reply; not a word spake Hector in answer:
Then, in accents mild, spake Helen; and thus she address'd him.

"Thou by alliance the brother of me, wretched author of evil,
Better by far had it been, on the day when my mother produced me,
That the fierce whirlwind-blast had borne the unfortunate infant
To the far mountain-top, or the depths of the turbulent ocean.

[o] Some commentators say that this suggestion is mere artifice on the part of Hector. It seems rather to be the natural expression of sarcastic indignation.

So, had the waves overwhelm'd me, nor spared for so evil a future.
But, as it thus was decreed, as the Gods ordain'd me misfortune,
Would! that a better man had been given to me as a consort:
One yet alive unto shame, and the scorn and contempt of his fellows.
This, that I have, possesses no firmness of soul:—and he will not
Ever, I fear, possess;—but the harvest he sows he will gather.
But do thou enter, my brother:—sit down on the couch and refresh thee,
After thy weary toil, and the trouble that compasses round thee,
For my unworthy self, and the sin and the folly of Paris.
Hapless indeed our fate:—Zeus makes us a sign and a warning;
Destined to live in song, as a warning to all generations."

Thus then in answer, spake great Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"Fond as thou art of me, Helen[p]—not now seek vainly to stay me:
I cannot linger now: for my mind is too eager to succor
Troy's brave sons; who are dreadfully yearning for me in my absence.
Stir up the man to the field; let himself make an effort for action;
So he may overtake me again ere I part from the city.
I must away to my home,—that my eyes yet again may behold them,
Those at my house—both the wife of my heart, and my innocent infant.
None can say if again I return from the fight to rejoin them,
Or perish, slain by the Gods, by the hands of the sons of Achaia."

Speaking, away from the house went Hector, glancing his bright crest.
Soon did the chief arrive at the porch of his beautiful dwelling.
But, in the palace-walls, he Andròmache—her of the white arms—
Found not:—she, with her child by her side, and her comely attendant,
Went to her wonted stand, on the watch-tower; weeping and wailing.
Hector had search'd thro' the palace within; and, unable to find her,
Stood in the porch without; and question'd the female domestics.

[p] The evident partiality of Hector for Helen, in itself goes far in vindication of her innocence. See Mr. Gladstone's critique upon the three characters of Hector, Helen, and Paris. Glad. Hom. v. 3, p. 555 *et seq.*

" Tell me, ye maids of the house, speak quickly, and answer correctly,
Where, from the palace-gates, has Andròmache taken her journey?
Say! has she gone to their houses, to visit her sisters or kindred?
Or to Athène's shrine, where the rest of the dames of the Trojans,
With their hair in the dust, are entreating the terrible Goddess?"

Then, in reply to the chief, spake the ancient head of his household.

" Hector, the truth thou seek'st,—and the words of my mouth will reveal it.
She has not gone to their houses, to visit her sisters or kindred;
Nor to Athène's shrine—where the rest of the dames of the Trojans,
With their hair in the dust, are entreating the terrible Goddess—
But to the topmost tower of Ilium.—Rumors have reach'd her,
Rumors that Troy gives ground, and great is the might of Achaia.
She is as yet on her path to the ramparts; hurrying onwards
Like unto one possess'd:—with the child in the arms of a servant."

Thus spake the ancient dame; and Hector again from the palace
Rush'd, by the way that he came, through the well-built streets of the city,
Back thro' the whole of the town—till he came up at last to the ramparts
And to the Scæan gates, on his way out again to the army:
When, lo! his beautiful wife met him hastily, running to meet him;
Sprung from a hero-father, Andròmache, child of Eëtion;
He who had dwelt as king in the shade of the Placian Forests,
In Hypoplacian Thebes; Cilician tribes were his subjects.
His fair daughter was wife unto Hector—the loftily-crested.—
Thus did she meet her husband.—The servant running beside her,
Bearing the child in her arms:—yet unconscious; it was but an infant;
Hector's own loved child, and bright as a star in its beauty.
Hector had named it Scamandrius; but by the rest of the Trojans,
After himself, was it known as Astyanax, guard of the city.
He, when he saw his child, stood smiling upon it in silence.
Close to her husband's side, came Andròmache, bitterly weeping;

Clung with her hand to his arm :—and tenderly spoke and address'd him.

" O suicidal valor !—And hast thou no pity upon us ?—
None upon this poor child—upon me, the sad wife of thy bosom,
Wife now—widow that will be !—For soon will the sons of Achaia
Crush thee, all combined.—And for me, ere the day has arrivèd,
That which awaits thy fall, far better that earth lay upon me !
When thou'st rush'd upon fate, farewell to all joy in existence :
Nought but misery then !—I have now neither father nor mother.
I had a gallant father.—He fell by the sword of Achilleus ;
Fell, when the hero captured Cilicia's favorite city ;
Thebes of the towering gates : and Eëtion died in the onslaught.
Yet, though he slaughter'd my father, he stripp'd not the spoil from his shoulders :
Burning the corpse on the pile with the beautiful armor upon it[q].
Heaping a funeral mound :—all around grow elms, which were planted
By the Orestiades, nymphs of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder.
Brethren seven were mine :—they grew up with me in the palace :
All, in one sad day, took one sad journey together :
All were slain, at once, by the arm of the mighty Achilleus :
All in a day they died, 'mid their flocks and the herds of the oxen.
I had a mother too.—She was queen in the Placian woodlands ;
She went captive away 'mid the spoil of our plunder'd possessions :
And when the victor released her, and took the rich price of the ransom,
Artemis, archress-queen, struck her dead in the halls of her fathers.
All are dead and gone.—But *thou*, Hector, art father, and mother,
Brother, and more than these—for thou art my dear gallant husband !
Oh then have pity upon us !—Remain in the strength of the ramparts !
Leave not this infant an orphan, his mother a desolate widow !
Range thy men here by the fig-trees !—Here is the city the weakest ;
Here is the point of attack ; it is here that the foe will assail us.
Thrice they have tried us here : thrice made the assault with their bravest,

[q] This, considering the customs of the age, must be regarded as a singular instance of chivalrous courtesy.

Led by the mighty Ajaces, Idomeneus, valorous monarch;
By the Atridæ twain, and Tydeus' valorous offspring.
Whether success was promised by word of a far-seeing prophet;
Or in their own brave minds were the motive alone and incentive."

Then, in reply, spake thus, great Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"All these things will I care for.—But how, O my wife! could I face them—
Troy's brave sons, and her dames with their long robes sweeping behind them—
If, as a dastard, afar from the rest, I were skulking from battle?
I have a soul too proud:—I have ever been wont to be foremost;
Ever to lead on the armies of Troy, far in front of the vanguard:
Fighting, to keep intact my fame, and the fame of my father.
For—as regards the result,—I am surely persuaded, and know well,
That dark day rolls on that sees Ilion perish for ever;
Perish, with warlike Priam, and all the brave people of Priam.
But not, for perishing Troy or her sons, does such bitterness wring me,
Neither for Hecuba's self, nor for Priam the King, for my father;
Nor for my brethren's fate—when the youths, altho' many and valiant,
Roll—as they will—in the dust, near the sword of the conquering foeman—
As for *thy* fate—my wife!—When some Argive, gleaming in armor,
Leads thee away in tears, and the day of captivity meets thee.
Then when, in Argive lands, by the harsh command of a stranger,
Thou, as a slave, shalt work at the loom, or carry the water
From Messœa's springs, or the famous Hyperean fountain,
Then will they stand and say, as the tears trickle over thine eyelids,
'This was the wife of Hector:—of him, who was foremost in battle
Of Troy's valiant sons:—in the war beneath Ilion's ramparts.'
And, as thou hearest the word, old griefs will come freshly upon thee;
There, with no husband near:—no protector to comfort or aid thee.
As for myself, may earth ere then heap her burden upon me!
So, shall I see not thy wrongs:—I shall hear not the cry of thine anguish."

Thus spake the chief: and stretched out his arms to the child, to embrace it.
But, to the nurse's breast, did the child cling screaming in terror;
For it remembered not its father's face, over-shaded
By his resplendent helm. And the flash of the brass, and the horsehair
Waving above the crest, struck its little mind with amazement.
Father and mother smiled at the fright of the infant;—and Hector
Straightway raised from his forehead the mass of the helmet, and placed it
Close by his feet on earth; and it stood, bright-gleaming, beside him.
Then did he take up and fondle his innocent child; and he raised it
High in his arms; and pray'd unto Zeus and the other Immortals.

"Zeus, and ye rest of the Gods, hear the prayer that I proffer before you!
Grant, that this boy of mine, may, as I, win a name 'mid the Trojans!
Let him be strong in fight, and a prince full of might for his country!
Let it of him be said—when he comes, as a victor, from battle,
Bearing the blood-stain'd spoils of some notable foe—'Not his father
Equall'd this chief in fame!'—and his mother be present to hear it!"

Thus did he speak, and gave up the child to the arms of its mother.
She took the infant back[r], and laid it to rest in her bosom,
Smiling amid her tears:—and her husband view'd her with pity;
Sooth'd her hand with his, and call'd her by name and address'd her.

"Nay! do not grieve for me thus; nor be over-anxious about me!
Until his time arrives, no man can descend unto Hades;
Nor is there one upon earth, who can fly from the fate that awaits him;
Brave though he be, or a dastard, the doom of his destiny meets him.
Thou to the house return—take charge of the cares that demand thee.
Ply thou the loom and the distaff:—apportion the tasks to the maidens;
All their accustomed work:—to men leave the cares of the battle:
Cares appertaining to all:—appertaining to me above all men."

[r] Took it herself, instead of again giving it to the nurse.

Thus spake the gallant chieftain—resuming the cone of his helmet,
Crested with horses' hair :—and his wife went away to her dwelling ;
Weeping fast as she went, and frequently looking behind her.—
And when she came back again to the doors of the beautiful palace,
That of her warrior-spouse,—there she found all the female attendants :
And in their breasts, as her own, she excited the tumult of passion.
Hector, alive, they bewept, as men mourn o'er the departed :
For he would never return—so they said—back again from the battle :
Never escape, with life, from the hands of the sons of Achaia.

Nor, in his high-built halls did Paris venture to linger :
But having sheath'd his limbs, in his harness, gleaming in bright brass,
Pass'd thro' the town in haste ;—all proud of his speed and his vigor.
As when a pamper'd steed, high fed in luxurious stables,
Breaks from the halter, loose, and careers o'er the flat of the meadows ;
Seeking his wonted haunts, and the fresh cool bath of the river ;
Proud of his strength :—and he tosses his head :—and the mane from his shoulders,
Floats on the gale behind :—and he, proud of his vigor and beauty,
Moves, with prancing steps, to his haunts, and the herd of the females :—
Paris, the son of Priam, from Pergamus, shining in armor,
Thus moved, flashing along :—as the sun when it shines in its splendor :
So the refulgent chief moved swift to the battle ; and met soon
Hector, his godlike brother, just turning away having left her,
Even his own loved wife—at the place where she met and address'd him.
Foremost to speak of the twain was the godlike chief Alesander.

" I am afraid thy speed has been stayed ; and that I have detain'd thee,
Kept thee, by my delay ; nor have hasten'd as fast as thou bad'st me."

Then, in reply, spake thus, great Hector, glancing his bright crest.

" There's not a man in the host, who is right in his reason, and speaks so,
Who would impugn thy prowess and deeds in the fight :—thou art stalwart ;

Yet but remiss at times, and deficient in will: and my bosom
Holds but an aching heart, when I hear what is murmur'd against thee,
Deep, by the sons of Troy;—who for thee suffer grievous affliction.
But let us on!—and a time may arrive to think better of these things:
That time, if it arrives, when we fill up the goblet of freedom,
High, in our rescued homes; to the praise of the Gods everlasting;
Praises for Troy preserved, and the flight of the sons of Achaia."

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

Shows how Ajax fought in single combat with Hector.

THUS as he spake, from the gates to the battle the warrior Hector
Rush'd, with his brother Paris; the same brave mind was within them,
Urging them both on alike to the war, and the arduous conflict.
As, from the Gods above, unto seafaring men on the Ocean,
Rises the wish'd-for breeze,—as they steadily toil at the rowlocks,
Tracking the ocean-waste, and their muscles are weary with rowing,
Not less welcome to Troy in her need came her chieftains among her:
Came, and each slew a foe.—Paris slaughter'd the mighty Menestheus,
Arnè's vale was his home:—he was son of a mace-bearing chieftain,
E'en of Arèithöus by the large-eyed Phylomedusa.
Hector Eionous hit with the keen bright point of his jav'lin,
Full on his neck 'neath the rim of his helm; and he sunk in the death-faint.
Glaucus, Hippolochus' offspring, the valorous Lycian leader,
Struck, with a cast of his spear, in the heat of the mortal encounter,
As he retreated from battle, Iphinous, mounting his war-steeds,—
Dexia's warlike son:—through his shoulder the Lycian jav'lin
Drove, and he dropp'd from his horses and sank to the dust in the death-faint.

But when the slaughter was seen by the blue-eyed Goddess Athène,
Viewing her Argives fall, over-match'd in the mortal encounter,
Down from the peak of Olympus she rush'd, in the flush of her anger,
Unto the holy city; as rapidly met her, Apollo:

Met her face unto face;—all eager to succor the Trojans.
So, in their adverse course, did they meet, by the shade of the oak-tree.
First did the son of Zeus break silence; the kingly Apollo.

"Daughter of mighty Zeus, why rapidly thus, from Olympus,
Bends thy course to the earth? What fervor kindles within thee?
Is it in hopes to incline the doubtful scale of the battle
Unto the Danaan side?—No pity thou grantest when Troy bleeds!
Yet do thou listen to me, it were better for all that it were so.
Let us at least for to-day hush the war, and the fury of contest;
Let it subside for to-day.—They may combat again on the morrow:
Until the doom of Troy—since nought but the utter destruction
Of yon town can suffice the unpitying hate of Immortals."

Then, in reply to the God, spake the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.

"So be it, O Ecaergus!—I came down here to promote it,
From the Olympian heights, to the armies of Troy and Achaia.
What are the means thou proposest, for ending the strife of the heroes?"

Then did the son of Zeus speak in answer—the regal Apollo.

"Let us the strength excite and the courage of chivalrous Hector;
So, of the Danaan host he may challenge some leader among them,
Challenge to meet him alone face to face in the mortal encounter.
They will accept it with joy—will the well-mail'd sons of Achaia—
Joyfully send out a chieftain to peril the combat with Hector."

Thus spake the fiery God, and the blue-eyed Goddess assented.
Helenus, Priam's son, great seer, in the depths of his bosom,
Felt then the will of the Gods, and their providence working within him.
Close by the side of Hector thus, standing, he spake, and address'd him.

"Hector! son of the King—great Zeus not astuter in council—

Wilt thou be ruled by me?—'Tis the voice of a brother that bids thee.
Make them in peace sit down, all the armies of Troy and Achaia;
And do thou challenge alone of Achaia the best and the bravest,
Challenge to meet thee alone, face to face in the mortal encounter:
For, not as yet are death and destruction ready to claim thee.
This do I surely know, from the Gods who are living for all time!"

Thus did the prophet speak: and Hector joyfully heard it.
Soon in the middle space he restrain'd the advance of the Trojans,
Grasping his spear athwart:—and the van fell back at the signal.
While Agamemnon slacken'd the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia.
She then—Athène's self—and the silvery archer Apollo,
Sat on the tree of Zeus—on the tree of the Ægis-wielder—
E'en on the Oak-tree's top—side by side, in semblance of vultures:
Pleased at the sight of the hosts—as the armies settled in order;
Horrent with gleaming shields, and crests, and bristling weapons.
As when the south-west wind first wrinkles the face of the ocean,
With its commencing breeze; and the ripples darken beneath it;
So, in their long dark ranks, moved the armies of Troy and Achaia
Over the field of fight:—and Hector spoke and address'd them.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy,—and ye well-mail'd ranks of Achaia!
Hear me;—the while I speak, all the thoughts that are laboring in me.
Zeus, who is throned on high, has refused to accomplish the treaties:
Ills he retains in store;—many evils for both of the armies:
Till—on some stormy day—Troy's ramparts crumble before you;
Or that ye perish yourselves, by the sides of your sea-cleaving galleys.
—Ye have among you now, prime chiefs of united Achaia.—
Let whomsoever of these has a soul big enough for the venture,
Step to the front, and do battle alone!—Here is Hector to meet him!—
And I may promise him this:—may Zeus be my witness and hear it!—
If he prevail in fight, and I die by the point of his jav'lin,
Then let him strip these arms, and carry my spoil to his galleys;
But be my body restored to my home and my friends:—that the Trojans,

—Sons and daughters of Troy—may award to me funeral honors.
If I prevail—and slay him—if Phœbus award me the glory—
Then will I strip his arms, and carry the spoils to the city:
And I will hang them aloft, in the fane of the archer Apollo:
But I will give his corpse back again to his friends at the galleys:
So, may it lie, interr'd by the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia.
And, by the broad Hellespont, they may raise a big tumulus o'er him:
So that a man may say—some one of far-off generations—
Borne in his well-oar'd bark, o'er the dark blue stream of the ocean,
'There is the grave of a chieftain who died long ago in the battle:
He was a man of might,—but was slain by the mightier Hector!'
Thus shall beholders say—and my glory shall flourish for all time."

Thus did the Trojan speak;—deep silence fell on his hearers.
Shamed as they were to refuse the defiance, they fear'd to accept it[a].
After a pause, at length, Menelaus arose and address'd them:
Speaking in galling taunts:—for his heart lay groaning within him.

"Weak, vain-glorious crew!—Oh women, not men, of Achaia!
Shame and reproach will it be—uneffaceable, never-forgotten—
If not a Danaan chief can be found to do battle with Hector.
Back to your primal state—to the water and earth ye are made of!—
Sit, and perish at ease—let life go the way of your glory!
I will myself oppose him; and arm me for battle:—the conquest
Rests, 'mid the doubtful war, in the gift of the Gods, the Immortals."

Thus having spoken, the chief braced tighter his armor about him.
Then would thy life have ended;—thou surely hadst died, Menelaus!
Slain by the hand of Hector;—for he was thy better in combat:—
But thou at once wert seized and restrain'd by the kings of Achaia.

[a] This is one of those passages in which the glory of Hector seems to be somewhat inartificially exaggerated. No satisfactory reason can be suggested why three chiefs at least, viz., Diomed, Ajax, and Agamemnon, should on this particular occasion evince any indisposition to encounter him.

Atreus' son himself, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
Seizing thy strong right hand, thus call'd thee by name and address'd thee!

"Thou art but mad, Menelàus, my brother!—It little befits thee
This unthinking folly:—restrain thyself, grieved as thou mayst be:
Do not provoke to the contest a champion stronger than thou art!
Hector, the son of Priam[b]:—a man whom we all are afraid of:
Even Achilleus' self would meet him in glorious battle,
With an excited pulse.—How much art thou weaker than *he* is!
Then do thou rest in peace:—go again to thy trusty attendants.
Some other champion meet will be found by the sons of Achaia.
Bold though he be for the fight, though his lust for the battle be boundless,
Yet, will I venture to say, he shall rest with delight from the contest,
Feel it a happy escape when he rests from the mortal encounter."

Thus did the monarch speak:—and his brother assentingly heard him;
Knowing he spoke but truth—so he yielded; and then his attendants,
Joyfully pressing around him, unbuckled the arms from his shoulders[c].

Then, to the Argive host, rose Nestor, and thus he address'd them.

"Great, O friends! how great, is the grief this day of Achaia!
Oh! how deep were the groans of the sage—of the chivalrous Peleus—
He who the Myrmidon host led in battle and guided in council,
He who for ever at home, and with pride, in the walls of his palace,
Ask'd of the Argive chiefs, who their sons were, who were their parents,—
But when he hears how all thus shrink from the challenge of Hector,
To the immortal Gods will he raise up his hands, and entreat them;—
Praying to leave an inglorious race, and descend unto Hades.

[b] Yet Menelaus opposes him successfully in the 17th Il.

[c] It is somewhat difficult to understand what is intended by this constant reference to the putting on and putting off of arms. It would appear as if some of the heavier pieces of armor, *e.g.*, the cuirass and helmet, were for ease habitually laid aside whenever there was no immediate prospect of being closely engaged.

Would—unto Father Zeus, and Athène's self, and Apollo!—
Would, I were now in my prime,—as I was in the day when the combat
Raged by the swift Celadon:—when the mighty Arcadian spearmen
Fought, with the Pylian bands, by Pheia and streams of the Jardan.
Then, when the godlike chief, Ereuthalion, right in their vanguard,
Stood: Areïthöus' armor was glittering bright on his shoulders:
—(Great Areïthöus, call'd from his massive mace 'Corynètes[d],'
By all the men of the land, by the beautiful dames of the Argives;
For that he poised no lance, reck'd nought of the arms of the archer,
But, with his iron mace, broke a path thro' the ranks of his foemen.
Vanquish'd by craft, not force, he was slain by the arm of Lycurgus:—
—Slain in a narrow pass—where his mace with its nozzle of iron
Could not avert his fate—for Lycurgus, stealing upon him,
Planted a spear in his breast—and he fell on his back in the death-pang.
So were his arms stripp'd off:—those arms that were given by Àres.
Gracing the victor now; which he bore in the struggle of Àres:
But in his palace walls when Lycurgus was old, he bestow'd them
Upon his servant, brave Ereuthalion, fittest to wield them)—
Arm'd with these did he challenge the best and the bravest among us:
And all heard it with dread and alarm, nor would venture to meet him.
Till an undaunted mind urged *me*, to do battle against him.
So I accepted the risk—though in age I was youngest among them.
And I encounter'd the giant, and conquer'd by aid of Athène:
Slew him:—the bulkiest man and the strongest that ever existed.
I can remember the space that he cover'd when lying before me!
Such was I, once, in my prime:—if my strength were now as it then was,
Not unmated in fight should Hector await an opponent.
Ye, who are here on the field,—prime chiefs of collected Achaia,—
Seem disinclined to the task; and are shy of encountering Hector."

Taunting, the old man spake.—Nine champions rose up around him.
First, by a well-mark'd space, rose the King of men, Agamemnon.
Then rose Tydeus' son, the redoubtable chief Diomèdes;

[d] The mace-bearer.

Cloth'd in undaunted valor, then came the two mighty Ajaces;
Then came the royal Idomeneus, and, with the king, his attendant,
Merion, brave in the fray, and the equal of homicide Àres;
Rose then the gallant Eurypylus, valorous son of Evæmon;
Thoas, Andræmon's son:—and last was the godlike Odysseus.
These all started erect; all ready for battle with Hector.
Then to them spake once again the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"Shake ye together the lots; and decide who shall hazard the venture.
Who shall promote the renown of the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia,
Also promote himself:—if he do but come clear from the combat;
Come he but safely away from the strife and the mortal encounter!"

Thus did Nestor speak—each mark'd his own lot:—and they placed them
All in the helm of the King—of Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
Then did the armies pray—with hands upraised to the heavens.
These were the words of the hosts—these prayers were utter'd among them.

"Send the lot, Father Zeus! upon Ajax, or on Tydides,
Or on himself—on the King of the gold-stored town of Mycènæ."

Thus did the armies pray;—and the helmet was shaken by Nestor;
Till, from its hold, leap'd out his lot whom their vows had selected,
Ajax the Great:—then the herald to all who were present, in order
Show'd its secret mark, unto all of the chiefs of Achaia;
They, for they knew it not[e], disclaim'd one and all the inscription:
Till, passing on through the press, he arrived at the chief who inscribed it,
Ajax the Great, who mark'd it, and placed as his lot in the helmet.
And in his hand was it laid by the herald standing beside him:
And he discern'd his mark on the lot;—and he joyfully knew it—
Casting it down to the ground at his feet, he exclaim'd to his comrades.

[e] Each having put a private mark upon his own lot, which may be supposed to have consisted of shell, or any other small object which lay conveniently at hand.

"Comrades, the lot is mine!—I accept it as mine: and I hail it
Joyfully:—hoping, in truth, to return as the victor of Hector.
But do ye now, good friends! while I tighten my harness about me,
Pray to Cronïon Zeus, to the King, for his aid and protection!
Praying with bated breath—lest the Trojans hear and deride you.
—No!—Pray open-voiced!—No man upon earth do I shrink from:
No man, stout as he be, can compel me to fear by his prowess,
Nor by my own lack of skill:—for I do not stand here as a novice;
Not to be such in my prime did Salamis nurture and bear me."

Thus did he speak;—to Cronion, the King, pray'd all of the Argives;
Such were the prayers of the host, their eyes upraised to the heavens.

"Zeus, Father, throned upon Ida, most mighty, and glorious monarch!
Grant thou that Ajax bear the renown and the meed of the victor!
Or, if thou lovest Hector, and if thou art anxious to aid him,
Then let the chiefs both alike prove prowess, and share in the glory."

Thus as they pray'd, did the chief brace tighter his armor about him:
And, when it all was arranged, and his limbs all glitter'd in harness,
Onward the champion strode to his foe—strong, bulky as Ares;
Strong as the great War-God—when he moves amid armies to battle—
Armies that Zeus himself urges on to the death of the valiant.
Such, and in size[f] so vast, as a bulwark to all the Achaians,
Strode, to encounter his foeman, the great chief loftily onwards,
Proud smiles lighting his face; and his strong spear brandish'd before him.
All of the Argive host look'd on and exulted to see him;
And thro' the sons of Troy ran a sudden chill and a trembling.
Hector's own great heart beat rapidly, deep in his bosom.

[f] From this and other passages it has become the fashion among sculptors and painters to represent Ajax not only as a gigantic and robust, but as a clumsy and heavy warrior: but this does not seem to be in accordance with the true Homeric idea. On the contrary, both on the present (*infrà*, v. 260) and on various other occasions the charge of Ajax is described in terms indicative of great bodily agility.

No time now to be daunted;—no pretext now for retreating
Back to the troop of his friends:—for his foeman answer'd his challenge.

Ajax now drew near:—his shield as a tower before him—
Seven bulls' hides it contain'd, and was coated with brass, and an artist,
Tychius, dweller in Hyle, renown'd above all for his bucklers,
Fashion'd the glittering shield; seven hides he united together,
Hides of high-fed bulls, and the bright brass riveted o'er them.
This borne, fencing his breast, did the great Telamonian Ajax
Come up in Hector's front, and threatening thus he address'd him.

"Hector! you now may know—you can prove in a single encounter,—
How much of prowess remains 'mid the Danaan princes and leaders,
Aided no more by that breaker of ranks, lion-hearted Achilleus.
He on the lone sea-shore, by the beaks of his sea-cleaving galleys,
Nurses his deep-set wrath at Atrides, shepherd-of-people.
Yet—though unaided by him—we have those who are ready to meet thee:
I, and many as I.—But enough; let us make a beginning."

Then, in reply to the chief, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"Ajax, high-born chief, son of Telamon—ruler of nations!
Think not that I, as a boy, by thy threats can be frighten'd to meet thee:
Or as a helpless girl; or as one inexpert in encounters.
I am inured to the fight:—I am used to the slaughter of heroes.
Rapidly now to the right, now the left, can I handle my buckler,
Fashion'd of thick bull's hide:—this buckler that shields me in battle.
Well can my steps keep pace in the terrible measure of Àres:
Well can I lead on a charge, with the war-steeds dashing around me.
But, great chief as thou art, I'd scorn at a vantage to strike thee[g];

[g] This not being a solemn encounter like that between Menelaus and Paris, there was no previous arrangement as to who should begin. The readiness of the chiefs to engage in such a contest, so soon after the treachery which had been practised towards Menelaus

Yet with an open blow, such as this, I perchance may attain thee."

Brandishing, then he hurl'd his bright spear, casting a long shade.
Fair and true it struck on the seven-fold buckler of Ajax;
Full on the face of the brass, the eighth, last covering o'er it.
Through six folded hides did the keen spear pass; but it rested
Stay'd by the seventh strong coat of the shield.—Then by turn in the combat,
Ajax—high-born chief—sent his bright spear, casting a long shade.
Fairly of Priam's son, on the round shield, equal on all sides,
Striking, the furious spear through the bright shield hurried, and cleaving
Through, ripp'd up in its passage the damascene work of the corslet,
Cutting the under-garment, and down by the flank of the Trojan,
Drove right out—but he bent sharp down and eluded the death-stroke.
Drawing the spear-staves forth, the two warriors each on the other
Charged with protended lances;—like lions, eager for slaughter,
Or like the mountain-boars:—such courage was theirs, and endurance.
First, on the shield of his foe, came the spear of the issue of Priam;
Perfect the brass remain'd, and the spear bent blunted upon it.
Ajax then, with a bound, smote the Trojan's buckler;—and thro' it the spear-point
Pass'd right through: and it stagger'd the foe in his ardor for battle:
Gashing the skin of his neck; and the dark blood follow'd the weapon.
Nor was the fight thus over, for Hector—glancing his bright crest;
But, down stooping to earth, he a great stone heaved, that was lying
There, on the plain;—all black, and unhewn, and of mighty dimensions.
This did he heave and fling at the seven-fold buckler of Ajax,
Striking it full on the boss, and the brass loud clatter'd beneath it.
Ajax heaved, in return, then a stone, more bulky and weighty;
Heaved it and swung it aloft; and with gather'd strength he discharged it
Full upon Priam's son; and the great stone shatter'd his buckler,

on the former occasion, may be considered as a proof of the high estimation in which the character of Hector himself was held by them.

Striking him over his knees :—and he sank on his back for an instant,
Borne down under his shield[h] :—but his strength was renew'd by Apollo.
Then with their flashing swords they had closed in a sterner encounter,
Had not the sacred heralds—commission'd by Zeus and by mortals—
One from Troy—and one from the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia,—
Mighty diviners, both, Talthybius sage, and Idæus,
Come to forbid the fight :—'mid the combatants thrusting their sceptres.
First did Idæus utter the provident thoughts that possess'd them.

" Cease, my belovèd sons ! from the combat and arduous struggle !
Both are beloved by Zeus—by the great God rolling the storm-cloud.
Both are of prowess proved ;—we are all of us able to see it.
Night now comes to divide you—'twere well that you part and obey her."

Spake, in reply to the herald, the stout Telamonian Ajax.

" Let then thy words, O Idæus, be own'd and adopted by Hector.
He, to this trial of prowess, has challeng'd the bravest among us :
Let him but say 'tis enough, and I also am ready to own it."

Then to the chief, in reply, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

" Ajax, the grace of the Gods has bestowed on thee vigor and stature,
Knowledge of arms ;—in the use of the spear thou art first of Achaia !—
So, let us cease, for awhile, from strife and the mortal encounter ;
Cease for to-day—we shall combat again—till the God shall determine
Whose is the winning lot—whose victory—whose is destruction.
Night now comes to divide us :—'twere well that we part, and obey her.
Thou to give joy to the hearts of the hosts in the ships of Achaia ;
Thine own liege-men the most, and thy friends and thy trusty companions.
While I, leaving the field, and regaining the city of Priam,
Gladden the sons of Troy, and the long-robed dames of the Trojans,

[h] This seems to be the meaning : he could not, from such a blow, have fallen *upon* his sheld, as in Pope, &c.

Praying, as now, to the Gods, in procession, for safety to Hector.
But let us each now grace with a notable gift his opponent;
So that a man may say—if Achaian he be, or a Trojan—
'Deadly enough was the strife of these chieftains, heated in combat;
Yet did they part from the battle united in friendship together.'"

Thus did the Trojan speak—he a sword gave studded with silver,
Bright sheath too, and the belt emboss'd with figures upon it.
Ajax gave in return, all gleaming in purple, a girdle.
So, the two chiefs went off;—one away to the host of Achaia:
One to the men of Troy—and her people received him with transport,
Seeing him thus back again both alive and in safety, returning
From the invincible hands and the terrible prowess of Ajax:
Thus, beyond hope restored, they escorted him back to the town-wall:
Ajax, the while, was led, by the well-mail'd sons of Achaia,
Into the monarch's sight:—with the gladness in heart of a victor.
When in Atrides' tent all the chiefs were assembled together,
Then, to Cronïon's self, did the King of men, Agamemnon,
Slaughter a stately steer, full five years old was the victim.
When they the hide had flay'd, and the breast laid open before them,
Then they with nicest skill cut it up, and the best of the victim
Spitted and dress'd with care, and withdrew when the roast was completed.
And when the work was done, and they ceased from their toil and their labor,
Down to the feast they sat, nor did any lack ample refreshment.
Then did the hero Atrides, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
Send, as a mark of honor, the loin as a portion to Ajax.
And when the chiefs had fed and had drunk till satiety seized them,
Nestor, the sage, uprose, ever first to give provident counsel,
First to speak—as his counsel was ever the best and the soundest—
Earnest in heart for the weal of the hosts thus he rose and address'd them.

"Hear me, O Atreus' son!—and ye chiefs of united Achaia!

Many have died, this day, of the fair-tress'd sons of the Argives :
Darkly their blood has flowed, by the broad swift stream of Scamander,
Shed by the warrior-God—and their souls have descended to Hades.—
Then, with to-morrow's dawn, be it truce for the sons of Achaia ;
And let us seek our dead ; collect them, and bring them together,
Borne upon mules and steers ;—and the corpses themselves, let us burn them,
Choosing a spot near the fleet :—that the bones of the slain to their children
Back may return once more—when we visit the land of our fathers.
As to the site of the pyre, let us raise a big tumulus o'er it,
Heaping the earth from the plain—and in front of the pile, let us quickly
Build an embattled wall—as a fence to the fleet and the army.
Let us, throughout this wall, place portals of fitting dimensions;
So, through the line of the works, we may move to the plain with the chariots.
Near to the base of the wall be a deep trench dug to protect it:
So shall the ramparts repel both footmen and horse, as assailants;
Lest overweening Troy come near and attempt to insult us[i]."
Thus did the sage advise—and the princes awarded approval.

[i] It is somewhat difficult to understand what were the precise scheme and scale of these fortifications. The following particulars, however, may be collected from the present and subsequent passages of the poem. The general outline may be supposed to have been that of a semi-ellipse—that is, of an ellipse bisected along its major axis by the sea-shore. The works themselves were finished within twenty-four hours; so that, making every allowance for the number of men employed, they could not, considering their extent, have been of a heavy character. The wall itself seems to have consisted of large stones and rocks, piled together, of course without cement, and strengthened with piles and beams. It appears to have been sufficiently broad to admit of combatants standing upon and fighting from it, and to have been so low that (as in the case of Alcmaon, killed by Sarpedon, Il. xii) a warrior so standing was liable to be wounded by a lance-*thrust* from an enemy below ; and that, when the battlements were thrown down, wounds in the back or breast could be inflicted *across* the wall. It could not, therefore, exclusive of the battlements, have been much above four feet in height ; and perhaps five or six feet in width. The battlements, it may be conjectured, were an additional three feet in height ; making the whole seven feet or thereabouts ; which would readily admit of a battlement being torn down by Sarpedon, as described in the account of the assault upon the wall. There

Meanwhile the leaders of Troy in the uppermost town[k] met in council;
Hurried, confused with fear, at the gate of the palace of Priam.
Moved by a voice within, thus Antènor arose and advised them.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy!—brave Dardans!—aids of the Trojan!
Hear me, the while I declare all the thoughts that are laboring in me.
Argive Helen herself, let us give up at once, and the treasures;
Give them to Atreus' sons!—We have broken the bond of the treaty.
Ours is a perjured cause that we fight in to maintain;—to attend it,
No good e'er can be hoped—if we fail thus to make an atonement."

Thus did he speak, and sat:—then started up in the presence,
Fair-tress'd Helen's consort, the beautiful chief Alesander:
Rose up to answer the elder; and rapidly thus he address'd him.

"What thou hast utter'd, Antènor, mine ears have heard with abhorrence.
Better advice is thine if thy tongue could be moved to declare it.
Or if, in steadfast sooth, thou hast spoken the thing that thou thinkest,
Then, it is plain that the Gods who bestowed on thee sense, have resumed it.
I, on my part, say thus to the chivalrous chiefs of the Trojans;

also appear to have been towers, from space to space, probably consisting both in an enlargement of the area and in an increase of the altitude of the line of fortification, but especially in the former particular.

There appears to have been a space, of no great extent, but sufficiently large to admit of the formation of troops, between the wall and the ditch. In excavating the ditch the soil was apparently thrown out right and left—so that a high ridge was formed on the inner and outer sides of the excavation: thus increasing its apparent depth. If we suppose the actual excavation to have been four feet, and the mounds on each side to have been raised about three feet, this, especially when aided by the stakes, would be a sufficient obstacle to the passage of chariots, although offering no serious difficulty to infantry.

A wall and ditch thus constructed, especially in a light sandy soil like that near to the sea-shore, might readily in the struggle of a long assault be so broken down and filled up, as to admit in many places of the passage of horses and light chariots as well as infantry; as described or assumed in various parts of the poem subsequent to the battle at the fortifications.

[k] Containing the citadel and principal palaces and temples.

—As for the lady herself—I say, no!—I decline to restore her[l].—
But for the plundered wealth—which I brought with the lady from Argos,
That will I readily yield, and will add to it out of my treasures."

Thus spake the prince and sat—and then uprose in the presence
Dardan Priam's self:—to the great Gods equal in council[m]—
Eager to pacify both of the speakers he rose and address'd them.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy! brave Dardans! aids of the Trojan!
Hear me the while I declare all the thoughts that are laboring in me!
Take ye throughout our town as of wont, much-needed refreshment:
Then be the watches set—and each sentinel ready and wakeful.
With day's earliest dawn let Idæus go to the navy,
And unto Atreus' sons, Agamemnon and Menelàus,
State what is offer'd by Paris—by him who has caused us the contest.
Let him besides demand, that at least they assent to a respite
From war's direful din; that so may the dead be collected
Unto the flames.—Then we combat again, till the God may determine
Whose is the winning lot—whose victory, whose is destruction."

Thus did the monarch speak—and they listen'd in awe and obey'd him.
At their respective quarters the troops took wonted refreshment;
And, with the morrow's dawn, did Idæus go to the navy.
There, did he find, met in council, the Danai, servants of Àres,
Under the stern of the bark of Atrides—standing among them
There, with a loud clear accent, Idæus spake and address'd them.

"Hear me, O Atreus' sons—and ye chiefs of united Achaia!

[l] See note *suprà*, to Il. vi, v. 317. Hector does not appear to have been present at this council; his absence perhaps being attributable to his engagements as commander of the forces.

[m] One could almost suppose that the compliment, as used on this particular occasion, was ironical.

I at command of Priam, and all the best men of the Trojans,
Come to repeat in your ears,—if perchance that the offer may please you—
What is suggested by Paris—by him who has caused us the contest.
All of the plunder'd wealth, that the prince long ago to the Troad
Brought in his hollow ships—better, far, had they founder'd beneath him—
This will he readily yield, and add to it out of his treasures.
As for the beautiful wife of the glorious chief Menelàus,
Her he refuses to yield—though the Trojans urge him to yield her.
I am besides to demand that at least ye assent to a respite
From war's direful din :—that so may the dead be collected
Unto the flames.—Then we combat again, till the God may determine
Whose is the winning lot—whose victory—whose is destruction."

Thus did the herald speak—deep silence fell on his hearers.
Then, in reply, spake out the redoubtable chief Diomèdes.

"Let not a man of the host take the gold of the prince Alesander :—
Nay not Helen herself :—for a child may surely discern it—
See the approaching fate, and the doom that impends on the Trojans."

With one voice as he spake the Achaians shouted approval;
Pleased at the gallant speech of the chivalrous chief Diomèdes.
Unto Idæus thus in reply spake the King Agamemnon.

"Herald! the words you have heard are the words of the whole of Achaia!
Such is the answer she gives you;—and such as it is I approve it.
As for the slain, let it be as you will—I say nought in objection.
Dead as they and gone, let funeral honors await them!
We war not with the dead :—let their shades have rites that may soothe them.
Hère's thundering Lord! hear the terms of the truce, and attest it!"

Speaking he raised his sceptre, invoking the Gods as he held it.
Back from his mission, Idæus returned to the walls of the city;

Trojan and Dardan chiefs were collected together in council;
Waiting, with anxious hearts, for the herald's return from the navy:
E'en for Idæus' self:—and he came and deliver'd his message,
Standing amid them all.—Then they parted and quickly betook them
Some to collect their slain, and some to fell wood for the burning.
And on the other side went the Argives out from the vessels;
Some to collect their slain, and some to fell wood for the burning.

Now had the morning sun with level rays on the meadows
Struck, as he upward rose from the soft deep stream of the ocean,
Higher across the sky—and the foes came and mingled together.
Hard was the dreary task to distinguish a corpse from its fellow.
When they had found their dead, they the gore wash'd off, that defaced them;
Wept o'er the ghastly forms, and placed them in wains, and removed them.
Priam himself, great monarch, their tears check'd—mournfully silent,
High on the funeral pile they collected the dead, and consumed them.
And, when the fire was quenched, went again to the walls of the city.
While, on the side of Achaia, her well-mail'd sons, having sorted
High on the funeral pile their dead, there mournfully burnt them:
And, when the fire was quench'd, went again to the hold of the vessels.
And with the early dawn—while the darkness was yielding to twilight—
Circling the site of the pile met a chosen band of Achaians.
And to distinguish the spot they erected a tumulus o'er it,
Heaping the earth from the plain[n]; and in front they erected a rampart
With an embattled wall, as a fence to the fleet and the army.
And in the wall placed portals of well-assorted dimensions,
That through the line of the works they might move to the plain with the chariots.
Near to the base of the wall, then a deep trench dug to protect it,

[n] See an article in the "Journal of the Archæological Institute" for March 1859, giving an account of the opening of the tumulus of Hanai Tepih in the Troad: where "the marvellous quantity of calcined bones induced the supposition that it was the funeral pile of a very great number of bodies."

Wide at the top, and deep at the sides, and with stakes at the bottom.
Such were the wearisome works of the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia.

But the Gods seated above—near Zeus, great Lord of lightning—
Marvell'd how thus they toil'd—the Achaians gleaming in armor.—
First of the Gods to complain was the great earth-shaker Poseidon.

"Zeus, Father! on the wide earth who now will be found among mortals
Willing to come to the Gods, and disclose his designs or his wishes?
Do not thine eyes behold how the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Build up a wall by their ships, and a deep ditch yawning beneath it
Dig?—But the Gods have received no hecatomb meet for their altars.
Wide as the blush of morn, shall the great work's fame be extended;
While all the work is forgotten, that I myself and Apollo°
Wrought for the Trojan king, when we toilingly founded his city."

Wrathfully then, in reply, spake Zeus—great roller-of-storm-clouds.

"Wide-ruling Ennosigaios! How vain are the fears thou hast utter'd!
Some of the Gods, perchance, might dread this mighty contrivance;
Gods far weaker than thou in strength and vigor of action.
Thy glory spreads—will spread—far and wide as the blush of the morning.
When back again in their ships have the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Sail'd to their native land, vent all of thine energy on it,
Breaking away yon wall, and levelling all with the ocean;
Smoothing the face of the shore with the deep-laid drifts of thy sea-sand.
Thus shall be overwhelm'd yon wall of the sons of Achaia."

Thus did the Deities hold high converse one with the other.
Meanwhile the setting sun saw an end to the work of Achaia:
Then did they slaughter the steers in the tents and portion the banquet.
And from the Lemnian isle came freighted with wine for the army

° Apollo and Poseidon are said to have built the walls of Troy for Laomedon; see Il. xxi, 446.

Numerous barks:—well freighted by Jason's son—by Eunèus;
Borne by Hypsìpyle fair unto Jason, shepherd-of-people.
He to Achaia's kings, Agamemnon and Menelaus,
Sent, of the choicest wine, full a thousand flasks as an off'ring.
So were they all supplied—were the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia—
Some gave brass for wine, some steel deep wrought by the artist,
Some gave hides of beasts, and some gave beasts with their hides on—
Some gave captured slaves—thus all fared well at the banquet.
So, through the livelong night, did the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Feast, and the like in the town did the Trojans and aids of the Trojans.
But through the livelong night did Zeus plot evils against both,
Rolling the thunder round—pale fear seized all as they heard it.
None dared taste of the wine ere the earth had received a libation
Unto Cronïon Zeus, and the God had been honor'd in goblets.
Then went all to their couches, and tasted the blessing of slumber.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

Shows how the Gods debate—Troy prospereth—Hector exulteth.

Now, upon earth, did the dawn rise, clad in her mantle of saffron :
And, into council, the Gods, with Zeus, great Lord of the lightning,
E'en on the loftiest peak of the deep-cloven crest of Olympus,
Came at his high command ; and they listen'd, as thus he address'd them.

" Hear, O ye Gods, all round !—and ye Goddesses, hear and obey me !—
List to the words of my mouth and the deep resolves of my bosom !
Let not a Goddess here, or a God—be he ever so hardy—
Dare to transgress my words ; but accord them a ready observance !
Let what I purpose to be, unimpeded await a fulfilment !
If, of the heavenly race, any one, I, apart from the others,
Find, volunteering to help either Troy or the Danaan armies ;
Terribly stricken, again, shall he come, if at all, to Olympus ;
Or, in my wrath cast down unto Tartarus, shrouded in vapor,
Hence, far distant, remain in the pit of the fathomless dungeon,
Chain'd to the brazen floor, with the portals of iron around him,
Far beneath Hades' gulf—as is earth from the vault of the heaven :
So may ye know and feel that I reign as the strongest among you.
Try me, if such be your will :—all yé Gods join together and prove me !
Letting the golden chain—that encompasses all—from the heavens,
Down ; and, with strength united, attempt, if ye can, to subvert me !
Vain were the fruitless toil :—strive all as ye may, ye succeed not :
Zeus is the highest still—despite your attempts to remove him !
But, if I will to move, without effort I drag you before me ;

Drag you aloft with ease, wide earth and the depths of the ocean;
Binding the links of the chain to a peak of the mighty Olympus:
Leaving the chain, and all, in the firmament swinging before me.
Such, and so strong, do I rule:—over Gods as I rule over mortals."

Thus did the Thunderer speak—and the Gods kept silence around him;
All were aghast at his words:—for he spake with fierce energy to them:
Until at length to the God spake the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.

"Zeus, Father! mighty Cronïon! the highest by far among monarchs!
All of us know thee well, and admit that thy might is resistless.
Yet can we never cease to lament for the Danaan armies,
Slain by a fate premature:—thus filling their measure of sorrow.
Since it is thy command, we will aid them no more in the battle:
But we must give them advice; we must proffer them provident counsel;
Lest they should perish all;—wither'd up in the heat of thine anger."

Answer'd again, with a smile, great Zeus;—he who rolleth the storm-cloud.

"Be not depress'd, dear child!—for my purpose, O Tritogeneia!
Is not as grave as my words:—and to thee am I ever indulgent."

Thus having spoken, the God to the yoke put the brass-footed chargers,
Swift as the winds in flight;—with gold manes waving above them:
Next, all robed in gold, he the bright scourge took;—it was gold too;
Fashion'd with art divine:—and mounting aloft in the chariot
Lash'd on his steeds to their speed,—and they readily bounded before him,
Right through the central space, 'twixt the earth and the star-spangled heaven.
Ida, streaming with fountains, the mother of beasts, he arrived at,
Gargarus, where was his shrine, and his altar breathing of incense.
There having stay'd his course, did the Father of men and of mortals,
Loosen his steeds from the yoke and roll thick vapor around them;

And, on the topmost peaks, he reclined in his might and his glory;
Watching the towers of Troy, and the ships of the sons of Achaia.

Then was an early meal, by the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia,
Hastily snatch'd in the tents; ere they girded their armor about them.
While, on the other side, did the Trojans arm in the city:
Fewer their troops for the field—but all eager and fierce for the combat.
No choice theirs but fight:—for they fought for their wives and their offspring.
Then did the gates of the town fly asunder—and pour'd from between them
Foot, and battle-cars; and the tumult arose to the heavens.
So, when the hosts, pressing on, met at last in the shock of encounter,
Shield struck shield—spear, spear—impell'd by the might of the warriors
Cuirass'd in brazen armor.—The well-boss'd orbs of the bucklers,
Rang as they met in fight, and the tumult rose to the heavens.
Rose deep groans of the slain, the exulting shouts of the slayers,
In a discordant din; and the earth ran red with the bloodshed.
While sky brighten'd to day, and the holy morn was ascendant,
Fell on each army the storm of the darts; and slain were the people:
But when the rising sun stood high in the centre of heaven,
Then did the Father of all raise golden scales, and within them
Place the alternate fates—decisive of death and destruction—
Of Troy's valorous sons, and Achaians gleaming in armor;
Held then aloft its beam, and weighted the scale of Achaia:
Charged with her heavy fates it descended; while that of the Trojans,
Rose on the farther side, and mounted aloft in the heavens[a].

Then, on Achaia's host, did he roll the big peal of the thunder
From the Idæan mountain:—the broad flash enter'd the dense ranks.
None could abide that sight; pale terror affrighted the bravest:
Nor did Idomeneus dare to remain; nor the King Agamemnon;

[a] The figure here is, in its details, the converse of that in Scriptural and ordinary use—"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

Nor did the servants of Àres remain—the two mighty Ajaces :
Nestor remain'd by himself in the tumult,—the hope of Achaia :
Not of his own accord ; but his horse had been struck by a death-shaft
Sent from the bow of Paris, the spouse of the fair-tress'd Helen :
Struck on the top of the head, where the first hairs sprout on the fore-
head ;
Right on the crest ; on the place where an injury soonest is fatal.—
Rear'd up the steed in its anguish—the barb stung deep to the brain-
pan—
Writhing beneath the shaft, and it troubled the horses[b] beside it.
While the old king from the steed cut the traces away with his falchion,
And disencumber'd his car, through the tumult, the chargers of Hector
Whirl'd their master along, on the front of the Pylian monarch.
And in unequal strife, had the old man certainly perish'd,
Had not his plight been seen by the valorous chief Diomèdes ;
Who with a terrible shout, thus appeal'd to the wary Odysseus.

" High-born son of Laertes, O much-designing Odysseus !
Fli'st thou thus—to be struck in the back as a fugitive dastard ?
Take good heed, in thy flight, no spear finds passage behind thee !
Rather return with me—and the old man save from the Trojan."

Thus did he speak—but unheard by the much-enduring Odysseus :
He hurried on in his flight, to the hollow ships of Achaia.
Yet, all alone as he was, 'mid the skirmishers mingled Tydides ;
Sprang to the horses' heads, right fronting the car of the elder,—
Neleus' hoary son ;—and with wingèd words thus address'd him.

" They are too much for thee, father ! these youths in the vigor of man-
hood !
Past is thy prime of strength ; old age lays burden upon thee :
Weak is thy charioteer ; and thy horses are feeble as he is.

[b] Nestor appears to have driven three horses : two in the ordinary way, and one in a side-trace.

Mount then here on my car; by my side—mark the breed of my war-steeds!
They are the steeds of Tros—no steeds better train'd to the battle;
Train'd to advance in the heat of the chace, or retreat from the combat:
These did I win, of late, from Ænèas, terrible hero.
Give thine own to thy servants in charge; mount here!—We will onward,
Onward, in straightest career upon Troy.—Even Hector shall know it;
Know, how my weapon is wild in my hand for the breast of a foeman."

Thus did the warrior speak; and persuaded Gerenian Nestor.
Straightway he gave his steeds to the charge of the trusty attendants,
Sthenelus, strong in fight, and Eurymedon, friend of the valiant.
Then both kings ascended the battle-car of Tydides:
Nestor guided the reins, and the fiery chargers he lash'd on
Full upon Hector's front—fast the battle-field vanish'd between them:
Fiercely he met their charge:—then Tydides darted his jav'lin;
Darted, and miss'd his mark;—yet the valorous Eneopèus,
Son of the mighty Thebæus, who guided the horses of Hector,
Felt, as the reins he handled, the spear-point deep in his bosom:
Headlong he plunged from the car; and aside flew the terrible war-steeds,
Swerving in fear at his fall, and his limbs lay slack in the death-faint.
Deep over Hector's soul swept sorrow at fall of his servant;
Yet did he leave him to lie as he fell—though deeply his heart swell'd[c],—
Left him, all unavenged, while he sought a befitting successor,
Equal to manage the steeds;—and he speedily found one to rule them;
Archeptòlemus, issue of Ìphitus;—he took the war-steeds,
Took them from Hector's hand, and guided the reins by his leader.

Then had been carnage all,—great deeds had been wrought in the battle;
Then, within Troy, had the Ilians herded, as lambs in the sheepfold;
Had not the Father of men and of Gods, seen the crisis, and saved them:—

[c] It may readily be conceived that the charioteer of a distinguished warrior filled a perilous position. Hector loses three successively in two days: viz. Eneopèus, Archeptòlemus, and his own brother Cebriones.

Roll'd the big peal of the thunder :—the blinding blaze of the lightning,
Flashing from heaven to earth, fell, fronting the steeds of Tydides.
Terribly glisten'd the ground with the blue sulphureous splendor :
Shaking, in mortal dread, sank the steeds 'neath the pole of the chariot :
Nestor's tremulous hand lost the glittering reins ; and in terror
Turning, he thus address'd the redoubtable chief Diomèdes.

" Turn yet again, unto flight, O Tydides ! the hoofs of the war-steeds !
Is it not plain that, to-day, no succor from Zeus can assist thee ?
This is the time for the foe :—Zeus accumulates glory upon him,
Even to-day—as to us may the God give the glory the next day.
Be his design what it may, man vainly attempts to divert it :
Man, whatsoe'er his might, seeks vainly to shake the Eternal."

Thus spake the Pylian king.—Then answer'd the brave Diomèdes.

" All thou hast utter'd, O father ! is true :—it is e'en as thou sayest :
But, what I fear, is this—and my heart is distracted within me—
Dreading that Hector say—as he stands 'mid the Trojans in council,—
' Tydeus' son has fled from the field to the navy before me.'
Thus will the Trojan boast :—yawn, earth ! for my grave, when it is so !"

Answer'd again, to the king, the Gerènian chivalrous Nestor.

" Gods ! O Tydeus' son, what an ill-advised speech hast thou utter'd !
Hector may say as he lists : may revile thee as coward, and worthless :—
But of the Dardan hosts, of the Trojans, who will believe him ?
Will he, with vaunts, convince pale widows of shield-bearing Trojans ?
Widows, who mourn their dead—laid low by thy terrible weapon ?"

Thus did the monarch speak—and wheeling the steeds for retreating,
Turn'd them around in flight.—As he turn'd, from the Trojans and Hector,
Came the triumphant cry ; and the spears flew whizzing around him.

Loud o'er the field of the fight rang afar the glad menace of Hector.

"Heretofore, Tydeus' son! have the Danai, famed for their chargers,
Held thee as first in place, and in honor, and first in the banquet.
Now will they hold thee nought;—will esteem thee weak as a woman.
Hence with thee, timorous girl!—Deem not, that, Hector succumbing,
Troy's proud walls can be storm'd,—her wives led captive before thee,
Off, to the hollow ships:—thine own fate first is approaching."

Thus did he vaunt—and sore was the strife in the breast of Tydides,
Whether to turn his steeds, and venture again on the combat.
Thrice did he swerve in his innermost soul and was stagger'd in purpose;
Thrice, as he paused undecided, from Ida, the peal of the thunder
Burst:—from Zeus unto Troy sent, mighty assurance of conquest.
Hector remark'd the sign, and shouted aloud to the Trojans.

"Trojans! Lycians too! and ye Dardans, dreadful in close-fight!
Quit ye like men, O friends! as beseemeth your former achievements.
Well do I know that the God, great Cronides, proffers the glory,
Conquest, and all, unto us;—heavy doom to the Danaan armies.
Fools as they are, with their trenches and walls—things of feeble resistance:
Things but of small account;—which vainly will seek to detain us:
Over the useless trench shall the fleet feet bound of my war-steeds.
And when the fight is won, and we stand by the sides of the vessels,
Then be the flames at hand, be the torches ready and blazing,
So may I burn their ships, and may slaughter the Argives beside them;
Slaughter them, choked and confused by the smoke and the flame of their galleys."

Thus the triumphant chief:—then shouted aloud to his war-steeds.

"Œthon, and gallant Lampus, and Xanthus, and thou my Podargus!
Now is the time to repay me the care that she lavish'd upon you,
Sprung from a valorous monarch—Andromache, child of Eëtion;

She who so often has heaped sweet corn in the manger before you—
Tempering water with wine to revive high courage within you;
Tending you—leaving myself, her own lord, wearied beside her:—
Press to the front in the chace! Oh, be speedy to-day!—Let me seize it,
Seize old Nestor's shield—Heaven's self hears the fame of the buckler—
How it is gold throughout;—gold both in the orb and the handles:
And from the breast of my foe, from the breast of the brave Diomèdes,
Rend yon glittering mail, deep-wrought by the hand of Hephæstus.
Let us but seize upon these, and to-night will the sons of Achaia,
Flee from our conquering arms, and escape by the speed of their galleys."

Hère heard his vaunt,—and in deep indignation and anguish
Sway'd her eternal throne, and it shook the long range of Olympus:
And thus in wrath, did she speak to the God, to the mighty Poseidon.

"Wide-ruling Ennosigaios! thou shaker of earth—when thine eyes look
Thus on the Danai slain, is thy bosom unmovèd by pity?
Yet they at Æge's altars and Helice's ever adore thee;
Heaping thy shrines with gifts;—let victory follow on thy part.
Did we but all combine,—all we who are friends of Achaia—
Troy were soon repell'd, and the purpose of Zeus were averted:
Then by himself would he sit, brewing mischief alone upon Ida."

Then unto Hère answer'd the great earth-shaker in anger.

"Bold as thou art in tongue, what an ill-advised speech hast thou utter'd!
I do not war with Zeus[d]:—were all of you ready to aid me
Yet would I shun such strife—so much is he stronger than we are."

Thus did the Gods above hold converse one with the other:
While all the space that divided the ships from the trench and the ramparts[e],
Now was crowded with cars and with steeds and with shield-bearing warriors,

[d] But see Il. xiii.
[e] The meaning of this line seems doubtful.

Driven in foul disarray—by the might of that rival of Àres,
Hector, the son of Priam—when Zeus heap'd glory upon him.
And he had even then laid flame to the navy—but Hère
Urged, in his inmost soul, the King of men, Agamemnon,
Unto unwonted toils in arousing, to fight, the Achaians;
So then the monarch went thro' the navy and camp of Achaia:
And in his strong right hand did he carry a mantle of purple:
Then did he take his stand on the great black ship of Odysseus,
Right in the midst of the fleet:—thence easiest noted on both sides;—
On the one side, to the tents of the great Telamonian Ajax;
And, on the other side, to the tents of Achilles—for these two
Guarded the flanks of the camp—on their valor and prowess reliant.
Thence, with a terrible shout, cried the King to the Danaan armies.

"Shame on you, men of Argos! Fair forms! no spirit within them!
Where are the boasts that we heard—those boasts of your might and your valor—
When, in the Lemnian isle, ye indulged in vain declamations;
And at your plenteous meals, full-fed on the flesh of the victims,
Quaffing the plenteous draughts from the high-crown'd rims of the goblets,
Boasted that each in the fight would encounter one—ay, or two—hundred
Of Troy's bravest sons?—Ye are now not the equal of Hector!
He by himself will toss the bright clear flame on your galleys.
O Father Zeus! is there one among all the high monarchs of nations,
Whom thou afflictest thus—and hast thus stripp'd bare of his glory?
Yet can I never admit that thine altar was ever neglected;
As in my well-bank'd galley I came to this shore, to my ruin,
Still unto thee have I burnt fat thighs and the choice of the victims;
Praying to raze to its basis the well-built town of the Trojans.
Hear then, Zeus! at the least this prayer, and have pity upon me!
Let us, at least, be preserved, and our lives be saved from destruction:
Let not, as thus, Troy's hosts have the victory over Achaia."

Weeping he pray'd—and the God heard the prayer of the King, and relented;

Gave him a sign that his host should be saved, and escape from destruction:
Sending his eagle abroad—most noble, in sooth, above all birds—
Trussing a tender fawn, timid young of the deer of the forest;
And, by the shrine of Zeus, was the fawn[f] dropp'd—right at the altar,
Where Panomphæan Zeus was adored by the sons of Achaia.

They, as they saw that sign—how from Zeus came the bird as an omen—
Back, with redoubled might, they again charged round on the Trojans:
And, of the Danaan host, none boasted to rival Tydides;
Many and brave as they were—for he, first, right round, with his war-steeds,
Dash'd to the front of the trench, and encounter'd the foes in the open:
Meeting them, hand unto hand, and a high chief slaying among them;
Phradmon's son, Agelàus—for just as he turn'd with his war-steeds,
Wheeling them round for flight, came the Argive spear, and it pierced him
Right 'mid the shoulder-blades—and the point traversed out at his bosom.
Headlong he roll'd from the car—and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.
Then came Atreus' sons—Agamemnon, and Menelaus:—
Cloth'd in undaunted valor, then came the two mighty Ajaces;
Then came the royal Idomeneus, and with the king, his attendant,
Merion—stout in fight, and the equal of homicide Àres.
Then came the gallant Eurypylus, notable son of Evæmon:
Teucer[g] came as the ninth—his bent bow curving before him;
Standing beneath the shield of the great Telamonian Ajax:
Ajax held up the shield,—and behind it his brother for shelter
Lurk'd, looking carefully round:—whomsoever he mark'd as a target,
Struck by his fatal shaft sank, yielding his life in the deep fray:
While, as a child to its mother, the archer retreated, for shelter,
Back unto Ajax' side: whose bright shield glitter'd above him.

[f] The fawn, of course, saved on the altar of Zeus, being emblematical of the Achaian army.

[g] He was an illegitimate brother of the Telamonian Ajax, by Hesionè, a daughter of Priam.

Which of the sons of Troy, died first by the arrows of Teucer?
First was Orsilochus slain; then Ormenus; then Ophelestes;
Chromius, Daïtor too, and the godlike chief Lycophontes:
Then Amopæon—thy son, Polyæmon—and then Menalippus.
All these under his shafts fell, roll'd in a heap[h] on the greensward.
Joyfully looked on the archer the King of men, Agamemnon;
As with his dreadful bow he was thinning the ranks of the foeman:
Came by the marksman's side, and thus spake in words of incentive.

"Teucer, my dearest friend! son of Telamon, shepherd-of-people,
Aim ever thus thy shafts;—bringing light to the Danaan armies;
And to thine aged father, to Telamon; who, though but base-born,
Claim'd thee as son of his own, and rear'd thee at home in his palace.
Now, in his distant home, in return for his care, give him glory!
And I will promise thee this—and the promise I make shall be heeded—
If, by the grace of Athène, and Zeus—of the Ægis-wielder—
Ever the day arrives when the Ilion wall shall be master'd,
Next to myself in rank shalt thou claim something to grace thee;
Either a tripod of price, or car with the chargers before it;
Or some beautiful girl with her love bringing joy to thy dwelling."

Then, to the monarch, thus, spake in answer the valorous Teucer.

"Atreus' glorious son, why thus rouse up with incentives
One who is all alert?—What prowess I have shall avail thee
Ceaseless: for ever since we have broken the foe, and repell'd them
Backward to the wall of Troy, I have mark'd and slaughter'd their bravest.
Eight are the forky shafts that already have leap'd from my bowstring;
All lie buried deep in the flesh of the bravest of Trojans;
But, let me mark as I will, yon dog, yet I cannot achieve him."

Thus spake the chief, and a shaft, sent hissing again from his bowstring,

[h] Teucer, *vide infrà*, v. 299, was all this time aiming at Hector, whose immediate followers were thus marked off around him.

Right at Hector's breast:—and he eagerly hoped it might hit him.
Hector he miss'd once more; but Gorgythion, offspring of Priam,
Great and valorous chief, felt deep in his bosom the death-shaft.
Son of the Trojan King by the beautiful Castianeira
Brought from Asymè's strand—and in beauty and form like a Goddess.
Down on one side sank his head:—even so sinks the head of a poppy,
Heavy with vernal rain, overcharged with the weight of the calyx:
So, of the dying youth, sank the head 'neath the weight of his helmet.
Teucer, another shaft sent hissing again from his bowstring,
Right at Hector's breast:—and he eagerly hoped it might hit him.
Hector again did he miss;—for the shaft it was turn'd by Apollo;
Archeptòlemus,—he who was guiding the war-steeds of Hector—
Fierce as he drove into fight, felt the arrow, deep in his brave breast.
Headlong he plunged from the car, and aside flew the terrible war-steeds,
Swerving in fear at his fall—and his limbs lay limp in the death-faint.
Deep over Hector's soul sorrow swept for the fate of his servant:
Whom yet he suffer'd to lie as he fell—tho' his heart swell'd within him—
Left him all unavenged:—till Cebriones[1] came up beside him,
Hector's brother;—and took, as commanded, the charge of the war-steeds.
Then, with a terrible shout, from his bright car Hector alighting,
Came out, on foot, on the plain; and, upheaving a stone in his right hand,
Rush'd upon Teucer's front—all prompt to disable the archer.
He, from his quiver's mouth, had a sharp shaft drawn, and had placed it
Firm on the tough bowstring;—and was drawing the arrow, when Hector,
—He of the glancing crest—by the collar-bone, close to the shoulder,
—Just on the tender place where the bone parts bosom and gullet—
Struck him, eager for fight, with the weight of the ponderous fragment,
Snapping the tough bowstring, and bruising the hand at the wrist-joint.
Fell from his grasp the bow;—and he sank on his knees in confusion.
Nor was his brother's fall unmark'd or unheeded by Ajax:
Running, he stood by his side, and the broad shield perfectly screen'd him;
Till he was raised from the field in the arms of two trusty attendants,

[1] Killed by Patroclus, *infrà*, Il. xvi.

Echius' offspring, Mecisteus, also the noble Alastor;
And he was carried by them to the galleys—heavily groaning[k].

But the Olympian God once more breath'd might in the Trojans:
Over the broad deep trench they again drove backward Achaia.
Hector raged in the van;—in the might of his truculent prowess;
As when the hunter's dog on a great wild boar, or a lion,
Makes an attack from behind,—well trusting its speed in retreating—
Hanging on flank or haunch, and watching for every movement,—
Hector, thus, on the rear of the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Press'd—as they fled in dismay—overtaking and slaying the hindmost.
But when in headlong haste, having traversed the stakes and the trenches,
—Though, of the flying ranks, full many were slain by the Trojans,—
Unto the ships they came, they rallied, and gather'd together;
Each man exhorting his fellows, and raising in deep supplication
Unto the Gods his hands, and entreating for aid and protection:
Hector, the while, now here, now there directed his war-steeds;
Fierce as the Gorgon's eyes, or those of the homicide Àres.

Hère saw the distress, and her bosom was moved with compassion:
Calling Athène, thus, she in wingèd accents address'd her.

"Child of the Ægis-arm'd!—are we still to endure it, and look on
Heedless, while Argives die—till the ruin is over and ended?
Cursed by malignant fates they are sinking apace to destruction,
Under the mad assault of but one man's fury unbridled;
Hector, the son of Priam;—the author of many disasters."

Then in reply to the Queen spake the blue-eyed virgin, Athène.

"Hector's ferocious soul he had long since breath'd in the death-gasp,
Slain by some Argive spear he had died in the land of his fathers;

[k] He was, however, sufficiently recovered to take part in the battle at the wall on the afternoon of the following day.

But that my sire above is possess'd by a spirit of evil:
Harsh and unjust is the God;—ever thwarting my aims and desires;—
Never remembering now what I did for his son[1]—how I saved him,
Many the time and oft, when Eurystheus harass'd the hero:
Weeping he pray'd to the skies for assistance; and Zeus, when he heard him,
Sent down myself, from the skies, to encourage the chief, and assist him.
Had I but then foreseen what now has occurr'd—when the hero,
Went on his mission below to the terrible portals of Hades,
Charged to o'ermaster, and earthward from Erebus drag up the dark hound,
Ne'er would he then have escaped from the sad dark Stygian waters.
Now, I am loved no more;—he has heard the petition of Thetis,
Who, as she kiss'd his knees, and his great beard touch'd with her right hand,
Pray'd him to honor thus, her Achilleus,—waster of cities.
Yet it again may be that his blue-eyed child shall be dearest.
Harness at once, for us both, to the yoke the swift strong-footed chargers—
I will myself in the home of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder,
Brace on my breast mine arms, and enter the battle—and see then
Whether this son of Priam, this Hector, with smiles can behold us,
When I appear in my might, on the roughset ridges of battle.
Or whether some great Trojan, a feast for the hounds and the vultures
—Fat and flesh—may afford; stretch'd dead by the ships of Achaia."

Thus did the Goddess speak—and the white-arm'd Hère obey'd her:
And she equipp'd for the journey the golden-caparison'd chargers;
Hère, daughter of Cronos—resplendent and beautiful Goddess.
And then the virgin Athène, the child of the Ægis-wielder,
Suffer'd her robe float down from her breast to the floor of her Father;
Robe of varied hues;—she herself had wrought and design'd it;
Put on her tunic of mail, and, arraying herself for the battle,
Wielded the horrid arms of her sire, of the Lord of the storm-cloud.
Then she ascended the car, flame-bright; and she handled the jav'lin,

Handled the great huge spear;—all before it the ranks of the heroes
Fall, as her Father's wrath burns hot in the breast of the Goddess.
Hère handled the lash, and the steeds flew impatient before it.
Flew the celestial gates for the car, all unbidden, asunder;
Gates, where the Hours on watch,—fair sentinels guarding Olympus,—
Roll now away thick clouds from the portal, now shroud it in darkness.
Right thro' the cloud-piled gates, at a touch of the goad, flew the chargers.
But, from the crest of Ida, Cronïon saw them, and hot wrath
Seized him; and thus did he speak to the golden-plumed messenger Iris.

"Hence, with speed—turn them back—nor permit them to seek an encounter
Thus with myself:—such strife would bring little profit to either.
And thus I warn them both—and my threat shall receive a fulfilment—
Under the car will I lame with the thunder the limbs of their swift steeds;
Hurl themselves from the seat; and the car dash shiver'd beside them:
Scarcely shall ten long years, as they roll on in slow revolution,
Serve to efface their wounds, or to heal up the scars of the thunder.
So may my blue-eyed daughter beware how she strives with her Father.
Hère provokes me less; I am not so anger'd against her;
For she is ever perverse;—whatsoever I wish she opposes."

Thus spake the God incensed:—and Iris, swift as a tempest,
Swept from the steeps of Ida, and reach'd the far range of Olympus.
There, at the entrance-gates of the deep-rifted mass of Olympus,
Met she the two on their course; and she told them the words of Cronïon.

"Whither in such hot haste? Are your minds turn'd to madness within you?
Cronïdes' self forbids you to aid or to succor the Argives.
These are the threats of the God,—and they surely will have a fulfilment,—
Under the car will he lame with the thunder the limbs of your swift steeds,
Hurl yourselves from the seat, and the car dash shiver'd beside you;
Scarcely shall ten long years, as they roll on in slow revolution,

Serve to efface your wounds, or to heal up the scars of the thunder.
So may his blue-eyed daughter beware how she strives with her Father.
Hère provokes him less—he is not so anger'd against her;
For she is ever perverse; whatsoever he wills she opposes.
But as for thee[m], bold wretch! what word may suffice to describe thee;
Shouldst thou thy dreadful lance adventure to point at Cronïon?"

Thus having spoken, afar flew the swift-footed messenger Iris.
Then did Hère turn, and again did she speak to Athène.

"Child of the Ægis-armed—great issue of Zeus!—for the future,
Never, for sake of men, let us venture to thwart or resist him.
One may be slain in the fight, and another in safety survive him,
E'en as the fates incline.—Let Zeus mete, to both of the armies,
Trojans and sons of Achaia, whatever may happen to please him!"

Thus did she speak; and around she the strong hoofs turn'd of the chargers.
These, with their manes of gold, from the pole of the car, did the Hours
Loosen, and lead them, and tether within, in ambrosial mangers.
Propping the car once more, on the low wall, gleaming in brightness.
And the two Goddesses, mingled again with the rest of the great Gods,
Sat, on their thrones of gold, but with hearts all heavy within them.

Zeus, from the top of Ide, with his whirling car and his coursers,
Went to the seats of the Gods, to the home of the happy Olympus.
Then were the steeds unyoked by the great God Ennosigaios;
Placing the car on its frame, and a coverlet spreading above it.
And on his throne of gold, himself, great Zeus of the broad brows,
Sat; and beneath his feet all the huge range shook of Olympus.
But, all away from Zeus, sat Pallas Athène and Hère;
Sat by themselves apart, neither question'd the God nor address'd him.

[m] Addressed to Athène.

Well did he know their minds; and he spake to them thus, and address'd them.

"Why are your minds so sad and afflicted, Pallas and Hère?
Surely, ye are not weary with recent achievements in battle,
Slaughtering sons of Troy, so deep is your anger against them.
I, such my strength of soul, such my might of arm to sustain it,
Would not have yielded ground unto all of the Gods of Olympus.
Ye, through your every limb, felt a well-timed terror arrest you,
Ere you had look'd on the fight, or the marvellous deeds that are wrought there.
—And you have acted well. Had you not, this had surely befallen:—
Stricken by thunder, deep, ye had never again, with your horses,
Come to the lofty Olympus, the home of the happy Immortals."

Thus did he speak, and deeply Athène murmur'd and Hère—
All by themselves they sat and devised more ills for the Trojans.
Yet, all wroth as she was, not a word spake Athène in answer;
Wild as her anger was, and enraged as she felt at her Father:
Hère her wrath kept not in the depths of her breast; but address'd him.

"Cronides! sternest of Gods! what an ill-advised speech hast thou utter'd!
All of us know full well, and admit that thy might is resistless:
Yet must we ever lament for the fate of the Danaan armies,
When they untimely fall;—fulfilling their measure of sorrow.
Since it is thy command we will no more aid them in battle:
But we will give them advice; we will proffer them provident counsel:
Lest they should perish all;—wither'd up in the heat of thine anger."

Then, in reply to the Queen, spake Zeus, great roller-of-storm-clouds.

"Lo! with the morrow's dawn, will Cronïon be greater in prowess;
Then thy majestic eyes may behold, if they care to behold him,

Wasting the serried ranks of the warrior-host of the Argives.
Hector, redoubted leader, his hand will not slacken from battle,
Till, to preserve yon fleet, shall the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus
Rise once more[n], on the day when around the high sterns of the galleys,
Rages the deadly strife; as they fight for the fallen Patroclus.
Such the decrees of fate—howsoever it grieves thee, I care not.
Vent thine anger at will! Hence away to the depths, if it please thee,
—Earth's, and the Ocean's gulf—where Iapetus, seated by Cronos,
Dwells in eternal gloom:—not a sunbeam lightens the darkness;
No breeze ruffles the calm,—deep Tartarus yawning around them.
Dwell thou there, if thou pleasest:—and deem not that I shall regret thee;
Thee, or thy rabid spleen;—for thine insolence knows not a rival."

Thus spake the God—not a word spake the white-arm'd Hère in answer.
Meanwhile the burning orb of the sun sank again to the ocean,
And with the sinking orb upon earth came night and the darkness.
All ungrateful to Troy was the failing light—but the nightfall
Came, with a welcome gloom, to the prayers of the sons of Achaia.

Hector, flush'd with success, call'd Troy's great chiefs to a council,
Taking them wide of the fleet, by the bank of the eddying river,
Out on the open ground; on a spot unencumber'd by corpses.
There, from their cars and steeds, they alighted, and listen'd in silence
Unto the Zeus-loved chief.—Bent forward, he leant on his war-spear;
Twelve cubits long save one—and the bright point glitter'd before him
E'en as the warrior moved—and a golden ring circled the spear-head.
Leaning his weight on his spear, he harangued thus the chieftains around him.

"Hear me, ye sons of Troy! brave Dardans! aids of the Trojan!
Well did I hope, ere this, unto Ilion, swept by the breezes,
Back to have turn'd, from destroying the fleet, and the host of Achaia:

[n] This is the first intimation to Hère of the divine scheme; agreeably to the promise made to her, *suprà*, Il. i, v. 545.

Darkness, however, has come, and has barely avail'd to preserve them,
Them, and their galleys, alike, on the narrow brink of the ocean.
So, as the night is here, let us act as the darkness induces—
Take our evening meal; and the sleek sides loose of the chargers
Each from the battle-car, and place good fodder before them.
And from the town itself bring sheep, fat oxen beside them;
Bring them with hearty speed;—bring also to gladden your bosoms,
Wine, and bread from home—and heap up fuel in plenty.
And through the livelong night—till the first dawn streaks the horizon,
Keep we the fires ablaze, and illumine the sky with the brightness:
Lest, under favor of night, should the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia
Seek to escape our shores, and the broad breast cross of the ocean.
Let them not thus at ease up the steep sides mount of the galleys.
Each who escapes to his home—let him carry a wound to employ him;
As he ascends his ship let a shaft overtake him and pierce him,
Or let a bright keen lance:—that others may hear it, and tremble;
Nor, on the sons of Troy, bring again the fell curses of Àres.
And thro' the streets of the town let the heralds make proclamation,
Warning the youths well-grown, and the hoary heads of the elders,
Bidding them look to the town, and the heaven-built[o] line of the ramparts.
Even our tender wives, let each on the hearth of her dwelling
Keep up a rousing blaze—and a watch must be ready and wakeful;
Lest, as the host is away, some ambush threaten the city.
Thus, great chieftains of Troy! I advise for the best; let it be so!
Let what I say be obey'd, it is soundest advice for the present:
As for the morrow's work, I will tell it betimes to the Trojans.
Good hopes have I, in faith—help, Zeus! and the rest of the great Gods!—
We shall expel these dogs, thrice cursed as they are, from the Troad;
Borne by unfortunate fates did they come in the holds of their galleys.
But thro' the coming night let us watch, lest evil befall us!
Day's first dawn in the sky, we will rise, and when arm'd for the battle,
Press on the fierce assault once more on the fleet of Achaia.
Then shall I see if Tydides, the valorous chief Diomèdes,

[o] *Vide suprà*, note to Il. vii, v. 452.

Back to the town will repel my fierce attack—or my jav'lin
Piercing his cuirass'd breast shall his red spoils win as a trophy.
He on the morrow's morn, if he waits for the thrust of my war-spear,
Well may approve his might:—but I deem that the sun of to-morrow
Rather will see him stretched on the field, 'mid his haughty companions,
Wounded sore to the death.—Oh would! I were sure of existence,
Endless, as that of the Gods, and with youth ever fresh and enduring,
Honor'd, as they are honor'd—Apollo and Pallas Athène—
As I am sure that to-morrow comes heavy with woe to the Argives."

Such were the words of Hector—the Trojans shouted approval.
Then from the yoke they loosen'd the smoking sides of the war-steeds;
Each chief tether'd his steeds by the reins to the head of his chariot.
And from the town they brought fat sheep, and oxen beside them;
Brought them with urgent speed—and besides, to give joy to the bosom,
Wine, and bread from home; and the fuel they heaped in abundance;
And, to the Gods above, offered hecatombs, meet for their altars.
Roll'd from the plain unto heaven the fragrant smoke of the victims,
Borne on the evening breeze—but the great Gods would not accept it:
Wrath was abroad in heaven—the city of Troy they detested;
Hated Priam himself, and all the brave people of Priam[p].

They, all flush'd with hope, near the corpse-piled ridges of battle[q],
Pass'd thro' the livelong night:—their watch-fires sprinkled the darkness.
As when the moon shines full in the sky;—and in glory, around her,
Glitter the stars of heaven;—no breezes to ruffle the stillness;—
But, in the calm clear light, long ranges of hills, and of headlands,
Forests, and all, stand out;—and the pure bright æther above them
Deepens, as star glimmers out upon star;—and the shepherd rejoices:

[p] The authenticity of the last five lines is doubtful.

[q] The expression used in the original is variously translated; but probably refers to the ridge-like appearance presented by a battle-field, both when troops are engaged in line, and afterwards, when the ground which they occupied is marked by the corpses.

Not less thick in the space 'mid the fleet and the stream of the Xanthus
Glimmer'd the watch-fire lights of the Trojans fronting the city.
There were a thousand bales burning bright on the plain—and from each bale
Flicker'd the light on the armor of combatants fifty around it.
Champing the pulse and barley, in long rows waited the chargers,
Tether'd beside their cars, and expected the Morn on her bright throne.

BOOK THE NINTH.

Treats of the embassy sent to Achilles—and of its rejection.

Such was the watch of Troy—while the breasts of the sons of Achaia
Knew but dire Dismay,—cold Panic's persistent attendant.
Grief unendurable weigh'd on the souls of their best and their bravest:
Even as adverse winds both swooping at once on the ocean,
Blow from the north and west, rushing down through the Thracian valleys,
And with a sudden blast strike the face of the deep;—and beneath it
Surge up the long black waves—and the wrake gathers thick on the billows;—
So, by contending thoughts, were distracted the hearts of Achaia.

Stricken in heart, deep-grieving in soul, did the kingly Atrides
Traverse his baffled host:—and he gave his command to the heralds,
Bidding them summon at once each chief, but in silence[a], to council;
Not with an open cry:—and he labor'd himself to convene them.
When they had gather'd together, in trouble and fear, Agamemnon
Rose up, weeping apace—as a dark-sourced fountain of water,
Over the face of a cliff, falls, scattering ever its clear drops.
Then, with a deep-drawn groan, spake the King to the chiefs of the Argives.

"Friends! brave servants of Ares;—ye Danaan chieftains, and heroes!
Cronides' self has imposed on your monarch a grievous deception.
Perverse God!—For he promised—and e'en by a nod he affirm'd it—

[a] Lest they should be overheard by the enemy.

Promised the sack of Troy, and a safe return to our homesteads.
Cruel the fraud he proposes.—For now he commands me, to Argos
Back to return, without glory; for thinn'd are the ranks of my people.
This may be pleasing to Zeus, who in might is the greatest of all Gods;
Many the crested cities his anger has sunk to destruction;
Many it yet will sink; for his might will be ever the greatest.
List then to what I advise, and let all of us yield unto reason;
Let us be launching the ships! Let us flee to the land of our fathers!
Troy, with her wide-built streets,—we are not yet destined to take them[b]."

Thus did the monarch speak—deep silence fell on his hearers.
Grieved to the heart at his words sat, awhile, all the sons of Achaia:
After a pause, uprose and spake the good chief Diomèdes.

"As thou hast spoken ill, I myself take lead to reprove thee.
Mine is the right, O King!—Attend, nor be anger'd to hear me!
Thou wert the first that dared, in the face of the Danaan armies,
Dared to impeach my strength and my prowess in fight.—All have heard it:—
It is the common talk of the elders and youths of the Argives.
Zeus, son of Cronos the crafty, by halves pours blessings upon thee;
Gives to thee sceptred sway: and the honor that ever attends it;
But, a more costly possession—a great soul—this he denies thee.
Dost thou, insensate! deem that the rest of the sons of Achaia
Are but as worthless in war, and base, as thy words represent them?
If thine own weak mind preaches flight—there is nought to detain thee.
Off then!—Clear is the way—and nearest in line to the water
Range are thy galleys' prows, that carried thee here from Mycenæ.
But,—the commander gone,—there are some of the sons of Achaia,
Who will remain and capture the Trojan wall:—or if all fly

[b] The above speech is the same as that delivered in Il. ii, v. 110 *et seq.*, to the entire army; omitting those parts which were calculated to induce a wish to continue the war. On the present occasion, it would appear as if Agamemnon, disheartened by the day's defeat, was really recommending flight. But many commentators hold a different opinion.

Thus far away, in their ships, to the much-loved land of their fathers,
Sthenelus here and myself, though alone, will remain,—and will combat
Unto the end of Troy—for with God came we here to destroy her."

Thus spake the king—loud shouted the rest of the sons of Achaia;
Cheer'd by the gallant words of the chivalrous chief Diomèdes.
Nestor next uprose; and thus did he speak to the leaders.

"Stoutest in fight art thou, amid all of the army, Tydides!
Wise above men of thy years, thy vote ranks first in the council.
None can thy words impugn, amid all of the sons of Achaia;
None can dare gainsay:—yet thy language is short of the purpose:
For in debate thou'rt young.—Were Nestor thy father, the youngest
Wert thou of all his sons.—Yet addressing the kings of the Argives
Wisely and well thou'st spoken—thy words well befit the occasion.
But do thou listen to me—unto one who is older than thou art—
For I will take in the whole of the subject before us—and no man
Shall find a word to condemn:—not even the King Agamemnon.—
Bound by no ties of race, or of kith, or of kin, is the villain
Who has a fatal joy in social strife and disturbance.
But, as the night is here, let us act as the darkness induces!
Taking our evening meal—and then let watchmen selected
Stay for the night, as guards, by the ditch at the base of the rampart:
This, if you listen to me, will be left to the young.—Thou, Atrides!
Order and show them the way!—As befitting thy rank and thy station.
Spread too—as is thy place—in thine own tent food for the leaders!
Thou'st good store of wine in thy tents, which the ships of Achaia
Bring in their daily voyage, from Thrace o'er the face of the ocean:
Thou'st all means at hand:—and hast plenty of servants about thee.
When we are met at the feast, take heed whose speech is the soundest:
Hear it and act upon it: for much do the sons of Achaia
Need good counsel and sound.—Far and wide in the front of the galleys,
Foemen's fires burn red.—Who, seeing them, feels not emotion?
Night, as a crisis, comes,—as a season to save or destroy us!"

Thus did the sage advise—they attentively heard and obey'd him.
And, all array'd in arms, went the guard to the front of the ramparts;
Headed by Nestor's son, Thrasymedes, shepherd-of-people.
And by the offspring of Àres, Ascalaphus brave and Ialmen;
Merion too, and the gallant Deipyrus and Apharèus,
And by the issue of Creon, the godlike chief Lycomèdes.
Seven bold chiefs in all:—and around each chief were a hundred
Of the selected youths;—their quivering spears in their right hands:
So they the outposts set on the edge of the ditch, by the rampart;
Kindled the watch-fires there,—and each took wonted refreshment.

Fast and thick, to the tent of the King, the high chiefs of Achaia
Came, at Atrides' call—and the feast stood ready before them.
And on the welcome fare all fell, and eagerly shared it.
And when thirst was slaked, and hunger's edge was abated,
Nestor first uprose—his counsel was soundest among them.
Deeply concern'd for the weal of the people, he rose and address'd them.

"Atreus' glorious son—great King of men, Agamemnon!
Thou shalt be first, thou last in my mouth!—For manifold nations
Bend to thy regal rule.—Unto thee Zeus renders a sceptre,
Kingly command, and the might of the law, for the weal of the people.
Well it becomes thee then, both to give good advice and receive it:
And to adopt what is said by another, whose feelings within him
Urge him to speak what is best.—It is thine to accept or reject it.
So will I plainly speak what I think best suits the occasion,
Nor will another man proffer sounder advice.—The opinion
Has not been form'd this day.—I have held it throughout—from the moment,
From that very time when, Prince! the fair damsel Brisèis
Parted, enforced by thee, from the tent of the wrathful Achilleus.
Not to my mind was the deed.—I attempted, in vain, to dissuade thee:—
Counsell'd thee much, but in vain:—thy wrath was too strong, and compell'd thee,

Swaying thy lordly breast:—and thus thou hast injured a chieftain
Whom the Immortals honor;—hast taken his prize, and retain'd her.
Now that the deed is done, let us think how best to appease him;
Soothe him with gifts of price, and soft mild words of persuasion."

Then, in reply to the sage, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Father! thy words are true—and my fault is recall'd to remembrance:
Mine is the sin: I admit it is all mine own.—An assistance
Strong as a host in himself, is that chief, loved by the Highest.
It is to honor him that the God thus humbles Achaia.
But as the fault is mine, as, by passion persuaded, I wrong'd him,
So will I make amends, and give rich gifts to appease him.
All of you hear me repeat what gifts I am willing to offer!—
Ten pure talents of gold;—bright tripods seven in number:—
Twice ten cauldrons of brass; and six fair couple of coursers—
Coursers compact of limb;—from the games they have carried the prizes,
Nor is the man destitute who is blest with equivalent substance;
Nor has he lack of the gold all men so honor and strive for,
Who has a store as great as I owe to my fleet-footed coursers.
Seven fair maids will I give, well skill'd in gifts of the artist,
Maidens of Lesbian race:—when himself took the city of Lesbos,
They were selected by me as the fairest 'mid all of the captives.
These will I willingly give him:—and, with them, her whom I seized on,
Even the damsel Brisèis:—and solemnly swear, as I yield her,
That she returns as she came; that I never her couch have ascended;
Ne'er have conversed with her as man converses with woman.
These shall be his at once.—And if ever the city of Priam
Yields unto Argive arms, by the grace of the Gods, the Immortals,
Then let him carry, at will, bright gold and brass to his vessels,
When Troy's spoil shall be shared by the conquering sons of Achaia;—
Let him from Trojan captives take twice ten damsels to please him;—
Nymphs who by Argive Helen may only be rivall'd in beauty.
And if we go back again to the bountiful region of Argos,

There let him dwell as my son ;—I'll treat him the same as Orestes ;
Even my youngest born ; brought up in the lap of abundance.
Three fair daughters are mine, who dwell 'neath the roof of my palace ;
Chrysothemis, and Laodicè, and Iphianassa[c].
Let him select from these, and take as a spouse whom he likes most,
To his paternal home—unportion'd.—I'll furnish a portion[d],
Furnish a portion such as none gave his daughter before me.
For, when Achilles weds, seven cities hail him as master :
Enope, Cardamylè, and Irène, shining with verdure ;
Phæræ, home for the Gods, and Anthæa, famed for her pastures ;
Pedasus, crown'd with her vines ; and the beautiful town of Æpeia.
All of them hard by the sea, in the deep soft region of Pylos ;
Rich are the men of the land ;—they are wealthy in sheep and in oxen—
And they will proffer him wealth, as a God will honor and serve him ;
And to his sceptred sway yield faithful and willing allegiance.
All these things do I give, as the price of his anger's relenting.
Then let him yield !—Of the Gods one only is stiff and unyielding ;
Hades, therefore is he least reckon'd of Gods among mortals.
And he may well submit :—for my rule as a monarch is wider ;
And, if we reckon years, I may count myself older than he is."

Then spake in answer again the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

" Atreus' glorious son—great King of men, Agamemnon !
Free from complaint is all thou'st offer'd to give to Achilleus.
So, let us choose our men ; and, chosen, despatch on the instant,
Unto Achilleus' tent,—to the tent of the mighty Pelides.
And, if you listen to me, I am ready at once to select them.
First and foremost of all, let the Zeus-loved Phœnix[e] conduct them :
Ajax the Great come next—and then be the godlike Odysseus :

[c] Or Iphigenia : the story of her having been sacrificed at Aulis is therefore evidently of later date than Homer.

[d] The fortune was usually paid *by* the husband—who received an equivalent in the wife.

[e] The old tutor of Achilles.

Let with them Hodius go, and Eurybates too, as the heralds.
And pour water and wash, and proffer your prayers unto heaven:
So may Cronïon hear us, and even have pity upon us."

Thus did the Elder speak—well pleasing the princes around him.
Then on the hands of the kings was the pure stream pour'd by the heralds;
While the attendants, crowning the golden cups with the dark wine,
Handed them round unto all, unto each of the princes in order:
When they had pour'd a libation, and drank as pleasure induced them,
Forth did they go from the tent of Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
Many the charges they had, and hints from Gerenian Nestor;
Who with his eyes upon each, but mostly of all on Odysseus,
Urged on them each fine art that might temper the soul of Achilleus.

So did they go by the margin of ocean eternally sounding:
Deeply they pray'd as they went to the earth-shaking Ennosigaios,
Praying that Peleus' son might his great soul bend to entreaty.
Soon did they come in their course to the tents and the Myrmidon vessels.
There did they light on the prince,—with a harp he was soothing his anger,
Fair, and of costly frame, inlaid, with a handle of silver,
Chosen, as special spoil, at the sack of Eëtion's city.
Soothing his angry thoughts, he was chaunting the lays of the heroes;
And, all alone of his train, sat Patroclus silent before him,
Waiting his prince's mood, till the music ceased to delight him.
Forward the two advanced, and the first was the godlike Odysseus:
Right in his front they stood.—Up started in wonder Achilleus,
Still with his harp in hand, and his seat left empty behind him.
Not less quick and surprised upstood then also Patroclus:
Welcoming both of the chiefs, thus spake the swift-footed Achilleus.

"Welcome! Ye come as friends.—Yet the cause must be urgent that brings you.—
Wroth as I am, I receive you as dearest 'mid all of Achaia."

Thus spake the godlike chief; and he marshall'd them into his dwelling;
Set them on chairs of state, on a dais gleaming in purple.
And thus urgently spake to Patroclus standing in presence.

"Bring, O Menœtius' son! our largest of all of the beakers:
Fill it with choicest wine: give each man a goblet before him:
All of my dearest friends are collected to-night in my dwelling."

Thus did the monarch speak—and the word was obey'd by Patroclus:
Quickly a massive bench did the hero place in the fire-light;
And then arranged sheep's loin and fatted goat-flesh in order;
Rich chine too of the boar; with the deep fat coated upon it.
Held by Automedon firm, they were carved by the mighty Achilleus;
Cut into delicate slices, and placed upon spits for the dressing.
Then did Menœtius' son, great chief, raise the heat of the embers;
And when the fire had sunk, and the blaze flickered down to the ashes,
Raking the embers smooth, put the spits well-loaded upon them;
Sprinkling sacred salt, as he rais'd up the spits from the trivets.
And when the meat was dress'd, and the banquet ready before them,
Then were the portions of bread spread round, by the hand of Patroclus,
Each on a glittering salver:—the meat it was served by Achilleus.
And he himself sat down, full facing the godlike Odysseus,
Hard by the side of the tent; then reminded his friend of the offering
Unto the Gods on high:—so he cast choice bits on the embers:
Then on the savory fare did they fall as it sputtered before them.
And when their thirst was slaked, and the keenness of hunger abated,
Ajax nodded to Phœnix;—and, minding the signal, Odysseus,
Filling a bowl with wine, first pledged, then spake to Achilleus.

"Here's to Achilleus' health!—We have finish'd a sumptuous banquet;
Not more dainty the cheer in the tent of the King Agamemnon
Than what we now have enjoy'd.—You both can feast us on dainties,
Unto our hearts' content.—But the feast no longer concerns us;
'Tis, O redoubted prince! the suspense of the fate that awaits us,

Fills our minds with dread.—None ventures to say, if the galleys
Will be preserved or lost, if thine arm will not defend them.
Hard by the ships and wall are the tents of the leaguering foemen:
Troy's proud sons themselves, and the far-gather'd aids of the Trojan.
Wide on the dusky plain are their watch-fires shining—their boast is,
Nothing will stop their arms till they master the line of the galleys.
Cronides Zeus for the foes shows wonders and signs in the heavens;
Rolling his bolts for them; and Hector, with truculent aspect,
Rages as one possessed; nought caring for Gods or for mortals,
If he is aided by Zeus:—and his mind is excited to madness.
All his prayers are now for the swift approach of the morning:
Then, from the galleys' sterns, does he hope he may master the standards,
Giving the ships themselves to the flames;—while the sons of Achaia
Perish amid their decks; in the tumult and smoke of the battle.
And, in my inmost soul, do I fear lest the Gods may accomplish
All that he threatens to do;—and destruction may really await us;
Perishing here before Troy—far away from the horse-breeding Argos.
Now is the time to bethink thee, though late, of the sons of Achaia.
Save them, in this their need, from the turbulent throng of the Trojans;
Lest, at a future season, remorse unappeased overwhelm thee,
All of the evil done,—no cure to be found.—Oh bethink thee,
Whilst it is yet in time, to avert dark fate from the army.
Think, O my friend! of the words so urged on thee once by thy parent;
On that day when he sent thee from Phthia to aid Agamemnon:—
'Son! may the Deities twain, even Hère and Pallas Athène,
Give to thee prowess in fight:—but do thou, in the depth of thy great heart,
Master thy pride of soul;—kind manners are better than prowess.—
Shun thou the strife productive of nothing but ill; that the Argives
Honor my issue the more;—be they youths or in place of the elders.'
Such were the old man's words;—though forgotten awhile, yet recall them:
Pause, be thine anger appeased!—and so shall the King Agamemnon
Offer thee gifts of price, if thou wilt but relent from thy choler.

If so[f]—but hear me, I pray, and listen the while I repeat them ;
All of the presents promised, but now, by the King Agamemnon.—
Ten pure talents of gold ; bright tripods seven in number ;
Twice ten cauldrons of brass, and six fair couples of coursers—
Coursers compact of limb—from the games they have carried the prizes :
Nor is the man destitute who is blest with equivalent substance ;
Nor has he lack of the gold all men so honor and strive for,
Who has a store as great as Atrides owes to his coursers.
Seven fair maids will he give, well skill'd in all gifts of the artist ;
Maidens of Lesbian race :—when thyself took the city of Lesbos,
They were selected by him, as the fairest of all of the captives :
These will he willingly give ;—and with them her whom he seized on ;
Even the damsel Brisèis—and solemnly swear as he yields her,
That she returns as she came ; that he never her couch has ascended ;
Ne'er has conversed with her as man converses with woman.
These shall be thine at once.—And if ever the city of Priam
Yield unto Argive arms, by the grace of the Gods, the Immortals,
Then mayst thou take, as thou wilt, bright gold and brass to thy vessels,
When Troy's spoil shall be shared by the conquering sons of Achaia :
And from the Trojan captives take twice ten damsels to please thee ;
Nymphs, who by Argive Helen may only be rivall'd in beauty.
And if we go back again to the beautiful region of Argos,
There shalt thou dwell as his son ;—he'll treat thee the same as Orestes,
Even his youngest-born ;—brought up in the lap of abundance.
Three fair daughters are his, who dwell 'neath the roof of his palace :
Chrysothemis, and Laodicè, and Iphianassa.
Take and select from these whichever thy fancy approves most,
To thy paternal home—unportion'd : he'll furnish the portion ;
Furnish a portion such as none gave his daughter before him.
For, on thy nuptial-day, seven cities own thee as master :
Enope, Cardamylè, and Irenè, shining in verdure ;
Pheræ, home for the Gods ; Antheia, famed for her pastures ;

[f] It may be supposed that Achilles here makes a movement, as if he were about to return an immediate refusal.

Pedasus, crown'd with her vines; and the beautiful town of Æpeia.
All of them hard by the sea, in the deep soft region of Pylos:
And for the men of the land, they are wealthy in sheep and in oxen:
And they will proffer thee wealth;—as a God will honor and serve thee;
And, to thy sceptred sway, yield faithful and willing allegiance.
All these things will he give, as the price of thine anger's relenting.
But, if Atrides' self and *his* gifts, yet are offensive,
If thou rejectest *them*,—yet, at least, let the whole of Achaia,
With her afflicted host, incite thee to pity.—Her armies
Will as a God look upon thee;—and great is the fame that awaits thee.
Hector must die by *thee*;—he is here, in his pride and his madness,
Ready, for thy right hand;—for he boasts, no hero among us,
Matches his force in fight;—none of all who have come in the galleys."

Then, in reply to the king, spake the swift-footed chieftain Achilleus.

"High-born son of Laertes—O much-devising Odysseus!
Most meet is it that now I inform thee, without reservation,
All that I feel in my mind;—for mine acts will be true to my purpose—
Lest ye molest me on all sides, and weary my soul with petitions.
Hateful to me is the man—as Hades' gates I detest him—
Who, by his spoken word, gives the lie to the purpose within him.
I—far unlike unto such—my mind lay open before you:
Nor will it ever be moved—I suspect—by your King Agamemnon;
Nor by the whole of his host.—The employment has ceased to be grateful,
Ever to combat the foes in the field, with no pause or cessation.
One fate waits on the braggart, and him going gallantly onward:
Be one a coward, or brave, one is held in the same estimation:
Death is alike for all; for the sluggard and man full of action.—
What am I better now for my toils and my trials and perils,
Constantly risking my life, in the fury and heat of the battle?
E'en as a mother bird, to the mouths of its clamorous offspring,
Bears their daily food, though pining of hunger beside them;
So, have I pass'd many nights under arms; weary, wakeful, and watching:

So have I spent many days, blood-stain'd, in the strife of the valiant,
In the red slaughter-field;—waging war for your delicate spouses.
Twelve fair populous towns did I storm on the coast with my galleys;
Twelve, save one, did I sack on the fertile plain of the Troad.
Much and rich was the spoil, that I gather'd from these;—and I gave it—
Gave it without reserve—to the hands of your King Agamemnon;
Even to Atreus' son.—He, abiding at ease in his vessels,
Took it:—apportion'd part:—but the bulk kept back, and retains it.
Yet some gifts were awarded to all of the princes and leaders:
They, all keep what they had.—I, alone, of the host of Achaia,
Lose my reward.—He has seized on my consort;—and let him enjoy her,
E'en as he will!—But what then is the cause which, to war with the Trojans,
Gathers the Argive hosts?—Why, here all the nations assembled,
Under Atrides' sway?—Is it not in the quarrel of Helen?—
Can no men but themselves—no men feel love for their consorts—
None but Atreus' sons?—Each man who is brave and deserving,
Loves his spouse, and defends her.—And I, too, loved my own consort;
Ay, from my inmost soul; though she came to my arms as a captive.
Since then he once has deceived me, and wrong'd me, I warn him, in future,
Let him not try me:—I know him too well.—He will fail to persuade me.
Let him consult with thyself, and the rest of the princes, Odysseus,
How to preserve your fleet from the hands and the flames of the Trojans.
Marvellous works has he wrought, without this arm to assist him;
Built up a wall, forsooth:—with a trench expanded before it:—
Wide at the top, and deep at the sides, and staked at the bottom!
Yet is it all insufficient to bridle the prowess of Hector;
Terrible chief!——Yet, methinks, when I went with Achaia to battle,
Small was the relish for war in the field that was noted in Hector.
Scarcely he ventured to pass through the Scæan gates to the oak-trees:
Once did he linger there—and his flight but barely avail'd him.
Now,—since Hector and I no more shall meet in the battle—
I, on the morrow's dawn, unto Zeus and the other Immortals,

First will my vows address, then my galleys launch on the ocean.
If 'tis a sight that affects you,—if anxious you are to behold it,—
You may at dawn behold broad Hellespont throng'd with my vessels,
Bound on the homeward voyage;—waves white with the oars of the rowers.
If a propitious voyage be awarded by Ennosigaios,
Three days' sail from hence we arrive at the fertile Phthia.
There have I wealth in store, that I left when I came to the Troad;
And I will take with me, there, all my gold, and my brass; all my treasures;
Beautiful dames and all:—and my bright steel:—all of the booty,
Claim'd, as my share, of right.—But my present, the gift that he gave me,
That, in his insult foul, has Atrides—your King Agamemnon—
Taken again.——Then repeat to him plainly the message I send him!
Tell it aloud; that the words may be heard by the other Achaians,
And they may feel, as I, should he dare, in his insolent humor,
Dare to impose on them;——for on me will he scarcely repeat it;
Dog as he is;—nor venture to stand in my presence and face me:
Say—'I decline his alliance alike in the field and the council.'
Once he has wrong'd and deceived me.—Again, he in vain may attempt it,
Smoothing me over with words.——One success is enough.—Let him perish
Unregarded—a wretch whom Zeus has deprived of his reason.
None of his presents for me!—They are hateful and worthless as he is.
Not though if ten times or twenty times over their sum were repeated;
All that he now possesses, and all he can pilfer from others;
Not all the gather'd wealth of Orchomenus; all of the treasures
Of the Egyptian Thebes;—where wealth is in richest abundance—
She has a hundred gates; twice a hundred of combatants issue
Forth from each gate—each borne in his car, and with chargers before him:—
Not if he proffer'd gold as the dust, or the sand of the sea-shore,
Not would he thus turn my anger away—would your King Agamemnon—
Ere my revenge were full for the foul despite he has done me.
No fit spouse for myself were the child of your King, of Atrides!—
Not, though in form she vied with the golden Queen Aphrodite;

Not though, in works of art, she were rival of Pallas Athène:
No spouse were she for me.—Let her wed with some other Achaian;
One who resembles her father: one used to the ways of a tyrant.
If the Gods bring me again, safe back to the home of my fathers,
Peleus there shall choose such a spouse as he deems will befit me.
There are Achaian beauties in Hellas and Phthia, in plenty;
Daughters of chiefs of name, residing safe in their castles.
E'en as my fancy moves, one of these will I take to my bosom.
Much more suits it my taste—'tis a lot that my soul more delights in—
There, to live on at my ease, with a beautiful girl for a consort,
Live—and enjoy that wealth which my father has hoarded to leave me.
What can you pay for life?—what equivalent give for existence?—
Neither would Ilion's wealth be sufficient, the wealth of her stronghold,
Such as she was in the days of her peace, ere the war with Achaia;
Not all the treasur'd stores in the temple of Phœbus Apollo;
All of the gold that gleams on the Pythian shrine of the Day-God.
Oxen and full-fleeced flocks may be lost or be won in the foray;
Tripods we buy with gold, and the bright bay crests of the war-steeds:
But when the breath of man passes over his lips—it returns not!
Life lost, comes not again: no strength can avail to redeem it.
I have been warn'd by my mother—the Goddess whose feet are as silver—
Warn'd of my twofold doom, and alternate Fates that await me.
If by the Trojan wall I abide, taking part in the contest,
Home I return no more; but high honor will ever attend me.
If I depart at once, far hence, to the land of my fathers,
Farewell then to my fame—but long life comes in lieu of my glory;
Long-protracted life:—death moved far away to a distance.
And to the rest of you all do I say, if my words may persuade you,
Back to your homes once more!—You are not yet doom'd to behold it,
Not yet to see the destruction of Troy.——Zeus, watching o'er all things,
Stretches his hand to their aid, and her sons wax valiant in combat.
You, as befits your place as ambassadors, backward returning,
Give my reply in terms to the banded chiefs of Achaia.
So may they rack their minds, and some other scheme may alight on,

Which may preserve your ships from the flames, and the sons of Achaia
Safe in the hollow ships:—for the present device has avail'd not—
It is as yet premature:—for my wrath yet is quick and enduring.
Phœnix can here remain, in the tents, and slumber among us;
And on the morrow's dawn can return to the land of his fathers,
Back, if he will, with us:—but I put no compulsion upon him."

So spake the haughty chief: mute silence fell on his hearers,
Weighing his deep stern words—fierce energy marking his accents.
After a lengthen'd pause old Phœnix rose and address'd them;
Tears bedewing his face:—for he fear'd for the fleet of Achaia.

"And is it even thus?—Is thy purpose, noble Achilleus!
Bent on return?—thy mind so whelmed by the weight of thine anger,
Even our fleet must be left as a prey to the flames of the foeman?
How, O my son beloved! could I bear here to tarry behind thee
All by myself?—I was sent to attend thee by chivalrous Peleus,
On that day when he sent thee from Phthia to help Agamemnon;
Thou but a youth in years;—nought knowing of terrible battle;
And as unskill'd in the council, where men win fame from their fellows:
Therefore he sent me forth to attend and teach thee in all things:
Both to be wise in speech, and strong in the deeds of the valiant.
Therefore, my son beloved! I never can willingly leave thee;
Never, with my good will.—Though the God himself, to persuade me,
Offer to shave my gray hairs, and the prime bring back of my manhood;
Such as I was when I first left Hellas, of beautiful women,
Shunning the wrath of Amyntor, my sire;—great Ormenus' offspring.
Sorely my sire was chafed,—a fair-hair'd girl was his anger;
Her had he sought in love, and my mother slighted and injured,
Even his lawful wife—she clung to my knees, and besought me,
Begging me woo the girl, that the elder might then be detested.
As I was told, so I did:—and my father, so soon as he heard it,
Cursed me with long deep curses:—and call'd on the hateful Erinnys,
That never son of my own should sit on the knees of its father;—

None of my own begetting.—The Gods gave heed to his curses—
He, the infernal Zeus, and the terrible Persephoneia.
Things being thus in my home, my soul no longer endured it,
Thus, with my father in wrath, to abide 'neath the roof of his palace.
All of my kindred and friends came about me, and much they attempted
There, in the walls of the palace, by prayers or force to detain me.
Ample store they slew of sheep and of slow-footed oxen:
Many a well-fed brawn, with the rich fat coated upon it,
Lay, spread out in the flames, to provide them a savory banquet:
Deeply the old man's casks shrunk, quenching the thirst of the drinkers:
Even for nine long nights did they take turn, sleeping beside me,
Keeping the watch by turns;—and the fires were never extinguish'd:
One burnt bright in the porch of the well-barr'd hall of the palace,
One in the vestibule blazed thro' the night at the door of my chamber.
But when the tenth day went, and the night spread darkness around us,
Breaking my chamber-doors, though firmly constructed, I issued
Forth in the hall—leap'd easily over the wall that surrounds it;—
Negligent guards and domestics, alike, all fail'd to perceive me:—
Thence far distant I fled thro' the wide-spread region of Hellas,
Unto the land of Phthia—the mother of flocks—and to Peleus
Came,—to the prince of the land,—and he with gladness received me,
And I by him was loved, as a son is beloved by his father,
Born in his sire's old age:—sole heir of his ample possessions.
And he bestow'd on me wealth—and he gave me a people to serve me;
Hard by the Phthian realm; the Dolopian race were my subjects.
Godlike, as now thou art, *I* have rear'd thee to be so, Achilleus!
I, and my love, have done it:—thou never wouldst go with another,
To thine accustom'd meals, nor to share in the feast at the palace,
Unless *I* were at hand, and *my* knee bent to support thee:
And that I carved for and fed thee, and held up the cup when thou thirstedst.
Many a time and oft in thy waywardness, suiting an infant,
Back, from thy fractious lips, came the wine on my vest and my bosom.
I have endured for thee much:—I have done much in striving to rear thee:

This one thought at my heart—that perchance, though the Gods had denied me
Offspring of mine own loins, I might mould thee, O godlike Achilleus!
Into a son of mine own:—one ready in need to defend me.
Then overcome, O Achilles! thy mighty soul!—to relent not
Is not becoming in thee;—for the Gods themselves are relenting;
Greater than thine though their prowess, and greater their strength and their glory,
And they are moved by gifts at their shrines, and by prayers of adorers,
Victims burnt and libations;—and thus they are moved and entreated,
Turn'd by the prayers of men who chance to transgress and offend them.
Prayers are the daughters of Zeus; they derive descent from the Highest;
Halting in pace, and wrinkled in face, and with vision deflected—
Ever, with anxious step, do they move on, following Àte[g].
Àte, robust of limb, with firm step, presses before them,
Far in advance; and ranges the wide earth; where she is present
Man suffers wrong—and then come they to redress the injustice.
Whoso reveres the forms of the Goddesses as they approach him,
Him do they profit much, and they hear and accept his petitions.
Whoso rejects their assistance, and hardens his heart in refusal,
Him before Zeus Cronïon they stand and impeach; praying, Àte
Ever may dog his steps, and his sin may be follow'd by suffering.
Then to the daughters of Zeus, do thou pay attention, Achilleus!
Yield unto them the respect oft swaying the minds of the valiant.
Did not Atrides now proffer much, promise more for the future,
Did he not offer this, but still persevere in his anger,
Nor would I, even myself, then urge thee to quell thy resentment;
Or, whatsoever their need, yet again give aid to the Argives:
But he has offer'd thee gifts in abundance; and more to succeed them:
And, to appease thy wrath, has sent thee the best of the army,
Men who are reckon'd the first 'mid the host of Achaia; and dearest
E'en to thyself:—no fault can be found with either their message,
Or with the bearers:—before, no one could dare to reprove thee,

[g] Or Injustice.

Wroth as thou wert.—We have heard like things in the lays of the heroes;
How in the days of old, when vehement anger assail'd them,
They would be moved with gifts, and won with words of persuasion.
There is a tale I remember, of days long past and forgotten;
One I should like to relate, if my friends and time will permit me.
'There was a battle once—for Ætolia fought the Curètes;
Calydon's town was the prize, and the troops met in mutual slaughter.
Seeking to raise the siege of the town came Ætolia's armies;
Bent upon slaughter and flame the Curètes gather'd around it.
For upon them, in her anger, had Artemis sent an affliction—
She of the golden throne—for the king had neglected to serve her
With first-fruits;—to the rest of the Gods due victims awarding;
Her, all alone of the Gods, Zeus-born as she was, he neglected;
Either from oversight, or forgetfulness:—great was the error.
So, in her anger of heart, did the Goddess, the heavenly archress,
Send, with his tusks white-gleaming, a wild boar,—terrible monster:—
Much was the evil he wrought in the fields and the vineyards of Œneus;
Tore by the roots from the soil the tall gray stems of the fruit-trees,
Casting them out on the earth, with their withering blossoms upon them.
Until at last he was slaughter'd by Œneus' son, Meleàger;
Who, from the cities around, collected the hunters against him;
Aided by fierce boar-hounds;—no scanty array could have slain him.
Such was the boar—and his death sent many, beside, to their death-piles:
For, when the beast was slain, from the Goddess strife and contention,
All on account of the head, and the shaggy hide of the monster,
Fell on Ætolia's valorous sons, and the mighty Curètes.
While on Ætolia's side Meleàger fought in the contest,
Ill the Curètes fared; and, strong as they were in their numbers,
Little they dared to abide in the field or relinquish their ramparts.
But when wrath,—such as that which seizes the hearts of the wisest,
Even the wisest and best,—was kindled in great Meleàger,
—(For, by his mother Althæa incensed, he abandon'd the combat,
Close in his home he remain'd with his beautiful wife, Cleopatra;

Daughter was she of Marpessa, the nymph of the delicate ankles,
And of the gallant Ideus; of all who on earth had their dwelling,
He was the bravest man, who, in cause of his beautiful consort,
Bent his daring bow at the breast of the kingly Apollo.
And to their child, Cleopatra, the name of Alcyone thenceforth
Both her parents gave—a name which recall'd the remembrance
Sad, of her mother's fate—whose voice, in her sorrow, resembled
That of the halcyon—weeping her seizure by Phœbus Apollo.)
So, with his spouse by his side, Meleager stay'd in his dwelling,
Nursing the wrath in his breast;—enraged, for his mother had cursed him,
Praying the Gods would avenge upon him the decease of her brothers;
Striking, with hands tight-clench'd, on the fertile earth, in entreaty,
Praying to Hades dread, and the terrible Persephoneia,
Bending down on her knees, with tears o'erstreaming her bosom,
Praying the death of her son:—and from Erebus deep did the Goddess
Hear her—implacable spirit, the wandering spectre Erinnys.
Now, at the gates of the city, the tumult rose, and the uproar
Of the assault on the walls:—and the elders came, and besought him,
—They, and the Gods' high priests consorted with them—and entreated
That he would up and help them;—and promised him gifts in abundance.
Where, upon Calydon's plain, was the country richest and fairest,
There, for himself, an estate, did they bid him take, and select it;
Fifty acres in size:—one half to be taken in vineyard;
Half out of land selected as working light to the ploughshare.
Much was the hero urged by his father the veteran Œneus,
Who to his high-roof'd chamber ascended, and passing the threshold,
Shook at the fasten'd doors, to embrace his knees and beseech him.
Much was he urged by his sisters, and much was he urged by his mother,
But he the more refused:—in vain did his dearest companions,
Men whom he most respected, unite in the task of entreaty:
Nor did they thus prevail, nor his soul gave way in his bosom,
Until his very chamber was shaken with strife;—and the stormers
Mounted the walls of the town—and the flames were beginning to kindle.
Then, did his beautiful consort his knees embrace, and with wailing,

Pray him at last to relent;—and she pictured the horrors attendant
Upon the sack of a town; when the foemen master the ramparts,
Killing the men of the place, and laying the flames to the dwellings;
Dragging the children away, and the deep-zoned forms of the women.
And, when he heard all this, his mind was excited within him:
And he aroused himself, and he glitter'd again in his armor;
Fought, in a sudden excitement of mind, and the danger averted,
Far from Ætolia's sons:—but saved, they refused to award him,
Aught of the tempting reward:—so he saved them, yet went unrewarded.'
Therefore do thou, my son! take warning from him.—Let no dæmon
Tempt thee to act as he.—When flames are consuming the navy
It were a harder task to preserve it than now.—Be persuaded!
Take what is offer'd!—and rank as a God 'mid the sons of Achaia.
If uninduced by gifts thou enterest later the combat,
Less will the honor be,—though perchance thou still wert the victor."

Then, in reply to the sage, spake the swift-footed leader Achilleus.
"Phœnix, father and friend!—prince, sage as thou art!—I assure thee,
I covet no such honor.—The fame Zeus gives, will suffice me;
Here to abide unmoved in my high-beak'd ships; while my bosom
Swells with the breath of life, and my knees move active beneath me.
But I will say to thee this:—take heed to my words and observe them!
Do not excite my wrath with entreaties and vain lamentations;
Seeking to serve the cause of Atrides.—Little it fits thee,
Thus to esteem my foe:—such love may be cause of estrangement.
Rather assist me in grieving the man by whom I am aggrievèd!
But do thou stay with us; take half of my realm and my honor!
These may return with their message.—Do thou here slumber among us!
Soft shall thy couch be prepared.—When the first dawn makes its appearance,
We will decide what is best;—sail homeward, or stay where we now are."

Such were the hero's words:—and he spake with his eyes to Patroclus,
Giving a sign that a couch should be ready for Phœnix:—to hasten

Thus their retreat from the tent.—Then the great Telamonian Ajax,
Godlike chief as he was, rose up to depart, and address'd them.

"High-born son of Laertes—O much-devising Odysseus!
Let us be off!—Whatsoever we say will fail of its purpose.
It is a waste of words.—We had better be gone with our answer,
Back to the Danaan host:—though the answer is one that will please not.
They are expecting to hear the result of our suit:—but Achilleus
Deep in his noble bosom retains an implacable hatred.
Harsh, and severe, he refuses to yield to the pleadings of friendship;
Friendship which yields unto him honor far above all in the navy.
Unrelenting soul!—If a man mourn, losing a brother,
Or for a son beloved, he accepts full penalty proffer'd:
He who the deed has done, an atonement makes, and is pardon'd;
He who receives the fine, lets his grief be appeased: and his anger,
Great though it was, relents:—but thy breast has a heart unrelenting;
Heart that the Gods have harden'd to ill:—one damsel the sole cause:—
Only one:—and we proffer thee seven of exquisite beauty!
Proffer thee gifts in abundance besides:—be appeased and accept them!
Honor thine own roof-tree!—We are here, as guests, underneath it;
Chosen from all of the host; and we trust that, to thee above all men,
We are the best esteemed, most loved, of the sons of Achaia."

Then to the chief, in reply, spake the swift-footed leader Achilleus.

"Ajax! high-born offspring of Telamon! leader of nations!
Something, in all thou say'st, accords with my mind and my humor.
Yet does my heart within me with anger swell, when rememb'ring,
How, by Atrides' act, I was wrong'd 'mid the whole of the Argives;
Treated, as one might treat a dishonor'd and beggarly outcast.
Therefore, return ye back, and relate the result of your errand.
Say, that the blood-stain'd war will by me unheard and unheeded
Pass, till the day arrives, when Hector, the offspring of Priam,

Comes in his brave career to the Myrmidon tents and the galleys;
Slaying the Argive ranks, and scattering flames on the vessels.
When he has reach'd my tent, and the long black hold of my galley,
Hot as he is for the war, his career, I suspect, will be stopp'd there."

Thus did the hero speak; and they each, upraising the goblet,
Pour'd a libation; and so went away;—led in front by Odysseus.
And to the household slaves the command went forth from Patroclus,
Bidding them spread, and quickly, a couch for the slumbers of Phœnix.
They, as they heard, obey'd, and a couch laid out for the elder;
Fleeces and mattress of hides; and a fine linen coverlet o'er them.
There did the old man sleep, and abided the rise of the morning.
And in the middle space, in the heart of the tent, was Achilleus:
And by the side of the king slept the delicate-cheek'd Diomède,
Phorbas' beautiful child, whom he brought from the island of Lesbos.
And, on the further side of the tent, were Patroclus and Iphis;
She of the slender waist; bright prize, whom the godlike Achilleus
Gave to his friend, when he captured the high-built city of Scyros.

But when the messengers came, back again, to the tent of Atrides,
Rising up, each in turn, did the rest of the sons of Achaia
Meet them, and proffer goblets of gold, and commenced their inquiries.
First to demand the result was the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Tell me, O noble Odysseus!—thou glory of all the Achaians!—
Will he return and deliver the fleet from the flames of the foeman?
Or does he yet refuse?—Is his great soul still in its choler?"

Then spake the godlike chieftain, the much-enduring Odysseus.

"Atreus' glorious son, great King of men, Agamemnon!
Far from abating his wrath, he appears more anger'd against thee;
More led away by his rage.—As for thee, and thy gifts, he rejects them.
Bidding thee take to thine aid, and advise with, the rest of the Argives,

How to preserve from the foemen the ships and the sons of Achaia.
As for himself, he says, when morn first streaks the horizon,
Then, shall his well-oar'd galleys be floating again on the ocean.
And to the rest of us all would he say—if his words may persuade us—
Homeward to set sail once more: we are not yet doom'd to behold it,
Not yet to see the destruction of Troy. — Zeus, watching o'er all things,
Stretches his hand to their aid; and her sons wax valiant in combat.
Such were the hero's words:—my companions here will confirm them,
Ajax and both of the heralds—they both are wise and observant.
Phœnix remains behind, at his tent for the night:—and the hero
Urges the elder to sail with himself to the land of his fathers,[h]
Back, on the morrow's dawn;—but he puts no compulsion upon him."

Thus did Odysseus speak: mute silence fell on his hearers,
Hearing the deep stern words:—fierce energy marking his accents.
Grieved to their hearts at his speech, sat awhile all the sons of Achaia.
After a pause, uprose, and spake the good chief Diomèdes.

"Atreus' glorious son, great King of men, Agamemnon!
Better, by far, to have never attempted the mighty Pelides,
Proffering countless gifts.—He was haughty, by nature, without this;
And this has made him worse; and his haughtiness now is redoubled.
Let us then leave him alone:—let him go, if his humor incline him,
Or let him here remain.—When the frenzy of passion impels him,
He will arise, as a God, and again take part in the battle.
Let us then do as I say: and my words observe, and perform them!
Let us retire to rest.—We have gladdened our hearts with the banquet,
Feasting on corn and wine; our strength and courage renewing:
With the fair prime of the day, early dawn with her fingers of roses,
Marshal in front of the galleys the ranks of the foot and the war-cars,

[h] It may be observed that this was not a faithful and full report of what had occurred: for Achilles, in his last address to Ajax, had impliedly withdrawn his threat of immediately re-embarking.

Urging them on to the fight :—and do thou fight first in the vanguard."

Such were the hero's words, and the princes, round him, assented;
Cheer'd by the gallant speech of the chivalrous chief Diomèdes.
Then, having pour'd a libation to earth, each went to his own tent;
There composed him to rest, and tasted the sweetness of slumber.

BOOK THE TENTH.

Shows how, from each of the hosts, went chiefs, as spies on the other.

All night long did the chiefs of the host of united Achaia,
Sunk in soothing sleep, lie peacefully, hard by the galleys:
All, save Atreus' son, Agamemnon, shepherd-of-people:
Little of slumber was his;—for the thoughts came fast in succession.
As when the thund'ring spouse of the fair-tress'd Hère, from heaven
Sends dense showers of rain, or the heavier plague of the hail-storm;
Or the concealing snow;—and the white fleece covers the meadows;
Or when he sends upon mortals the curse of the deep-mouthèd battle;
Not less fast, less thick, from the breast of the King Agamemnon,
Broke the deep-drawn groans, and his heart was distracted with terror.
Oft, as he turn'd his gaze from the fleet to the plain of the Troad,
Fell on his wondering vision the watch-fires fronting the city;
And to his ear came the tumult of men and of pipes and of tabors.
When he reverted his gaze, to the galleys and host of Achaia,
Thick from his temples the locks did he rend right off, in his anguish,
E'en as he pray'd to Zeus; and the groans burst thick from his bosom.
This then at last to his mind seem'd best—to resort unto Nestor,
E'en unto Neleus' offspring; the first of the host—and consult him;
Hoping, perchance, with him some notable scheme to arrive at;
One to preserve his host from the perils that gather'd around it:
Rising erect from his couch, he his garment gather'd about him:
Bound, on his shining ankles, the glittering work of the sandals:
Cast, on his back, as a cloak, the great red hide of a lion;
Tawny, and reaching his feet;—and then laid hold of his jav'lin.

Not less anxious at heart was the king Menelàus:—his eyelids
Knew no soothing sleep;—for he dreaded lest aught of misfortune
Fall on the Argive hosts;—who for him, thro' the waste of the ocean,
Came to the shores of Troy, and roused up the strife of the battle.
Over his shoulders broad he the bright skin threw of a leopard,
Speckled with spots:—then cover'd his head with the fence of the helmet,
Gleaming of burnish'd brass:—and his strong grasp handled his jav'lin.
When thus equipp'd, he departed to waken his brother—the ruler
Of the Achaian host, and revered as a God by the people.
Ready awake, and bracing his armor tighter, he found him,
Close by his galley's stern,—and he joyfully met and address'd him.
First of the twain to speak was the valorous chief Menelàus.

"Why thus in arms, good brother?—To seek from amid thine attendants,
One who the Trojan camp may seek as a spy?—Such an exploit
Were not an easy task;—and I fear no man will accept it:
Entering hostile ranks, all alone, as a spy, under cover
Of the ambrosial night:—stout-hearted is he who attempts it."

Then to his brother thus spake, in answer, the King Agamemnon.

"Both of us—thou and myself—stand greatly in need, Menelàus!
Of such counsel sound, as perchance may save and deliver
Us, and the Argive fleet;—for the mind of Zeus is averted;
Bending his mind alone great Hector's vows to accomplish.
Never have I beheld, never heard any one who related,
Of any man who alone had schemed, in a day, the performance
Of such marvellous actions, as, aided by Zeus, on Achaia,
Hector to-day has wrought:—not sprung from a God or a Goddess.
He has to-day done that which will furnish grief to the Argives,
For many future days:—such woes for the sons of Achaia.
But do thou go at once!—And Idomeneus summon, and Ajax,
Running with speed to their galleys:—I go to the vessel of Nestor,

That I may find and awaken the sage;—he perchance will attend me
Unto the outer guard; and there inspect and exhort them.
Him will they heed and observe;—his son is a leader among them;
Captain of all the guard,—with Idomeneus' gallant attendant,
Merion;—both of the twain do we greatly esteem and rely on."

Then, in reply to the King, spake the valorous chief Menelàus.

"What is it, then, thou commandest?—and what course am I to follow?
Shall I remain with the chiefs thou'st named, and await thine arrival?
Or shall I speak thy commands; that done, come again to rejoin thee?"

Then, in reply to the chief, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Tarry thou, there, till I come; for fear we should miss one another,
Under the gloom of night;—for the footways are numerous round us.
When thou hast reach'd their tents, speak loudly, and call them from slumber,
Summoning each by the name of himself, and the name of his father:
Rendering honor to all men; and be not haughty in manner!
We must, ourselves, take part in the toil of the host:—as on all men,
Zeus upon us imposes the burden of labor and sorrow."

So did the monarch speak—and, urging deeply, dismiss'd him;
And he himself went out, after Nestor, the shepherd-of-people.
Soon did he light on the king, in his tent, by the side of his galley;
Stretch'd on a soft-strewn couch;—and his arms lay gleaming beside him;
Shield, and two bright spears, and the glittering crest of the helmet.
Close by his side was his belt, all gleaming mail, which the elder
Wore, when he donn'd his arms, and girded him up to the battle:
Leading his host to the field—for age yet lightly oppress'd him[a].
Lifting his head from sleep, just awaken'd, and raised on his elbow,
Thus did he speak to Atrides, and question him thus and address him.

[a] Mr. Gladstone considers that his age was probably a little above seventy.

"Who art thou?—that alone, thro' the fleet and the ranks of the army,
Wanderest thus, in the night, while all men else are reposing?
Art thou in search of the guards, or some good friend who is missing?
Speak!—nor my side approach, thus silently!—Tell me thine errand!"

Then, in reply to the sage, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Nestor! Neleus' son, thou glory and boast of Achaia!
Know! it is Atreus' son, Agamemnon, is near; above all men
Harass'd with cares by Zeus—to endure while the breath of the living
Heaves in my beating breast;—and my knees move active beneath me.
Thus do I wander about:—for no sleep visits my eyelids;
All of my thoughts are turn'd on the war, and the sons of Achaia.
Much for the Danaan host do I dread;—all my confidence shaken:
I am distracted with doubts:—and my heart, in the depth of my bosom,
Beats with unwonted dread:—and my limbs all tremble beneath me.
If thou'rt willing to act, as no sleep comes to thine eyelids,
Let us be up and away, let us visit the watch and inspect them;
Lest, over-wearied by toil, their eyes close heavy in slumber;
And, overtaken by sleep, are forgetful of that which they watch for.
Foemen are near at hand:—we can never be sure, for an instant,
That, under cover of night, they seek not again to assail us."

Spake then again to the King the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"Atreus' glorious son! great King of men, Agamemnon!
Do not suppose that Zeus unto all the devices of Hector,
Gives his eternal sanction,—to all of his hopes.—I foresee him
Troubled with weightier cares—more even than ours—if Achilleus
Sets but his bosom free from the pestilent anger that fills it.
But I will rise and attend thee:—and then let us waken the others:
Tydeus' son, far-famed for his skill with his weapon; Odysseus;
Ajax, famed for speed: with them, too, the mighty Phylides:
And whosoever goes to arouse those chiefs I have mentioned,

Well were it, too, he awaken Idomeneus also, and Ajax;
Both far distant encamp, and their galleys lie at a distance.
Dear as he is to us both, and respected alike, Menelàus
Cannot escape my censure.—I speak it, although it may grieve thee,
Blaming his slothful sleep;—thee leaving to labor, unaided.
Seemlier were it in him if he labor'd in prayer and entreaty,
Urging each chief in the host:—for a crisis is closing upon us!"

Then, in reply to the sage, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Father! the times have been, I myself have ask'd thee to blame him.
Often he seems remiss, and but indisposed to exertion;
Yet is it not from sloth, nor from indolent want of reflection:
Rather he looks unto me;—and awaits till my course is decided.
But, on the present occasion, he first was awake and beside me:
And I have sent him already to summon the chiefs you have mention'd.
Then let us go;—we shall meet them abroad, in the face of the ramparts,
Halting amid our guard: for I there gave charge to await us."

Spake, in reply to the King, the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"If it be even so, not a man, 'mid the whole of the Argives,
But will attend with zeal, and obey the commands he may give them."

Speaking the sage arose, and his garment folded around him.
Bound on his shining ankles the glittering work of the sandals:
Flung on his ample shoulders, a mantle gleaming in purple,
Hanging in double fold; with the soft fleece curling upon it:
Then took a strong stout spear;—all brass was the head of the jav'lin:
And, thus equipped, went forth to the ships of the sons of Achaia.

First of all—Zeus himself not astuter in council—Odysseus
Was from his slumber aroused by Gerenian chivalrous Nestor,
Calling him;—and the alarm his senses reach'd in an instant.

Forth from his tent he advanced, and thus did he speak and address them.

"Why do ye, all alone, thus traverse the fleet and the army,
'Mid the ambrosial night?—What need, what danger, is urgent?"

Then, in reply to the sage, the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.
"High-born son of Laertes, O much-devising Odysseus!
Be not displeased[b]—in this great grief of the sons of Achaia:
Rather arise thyself, and assist us to summon to council,
Those who may best advise; whether flight, or renewal of battle."

Thus did he speak; and again, to his tent, went the wary Odysseus:
Over his shoulders broad he his buckler slung, and rejoin'd them;
Onward they went to the post of the brave Diomèdes; and found him
Sleeping without his tent, in his armor clad; and his comrades
Slept by his side; their heads had shields for their pillows; their lances
Stuck, by the nether-spikes in the earth, stood gleaming; the spear-points
Shone thro' the gloom of night, as the lightning of Zeus—and the hero
Slept by himself, with the hide of a wild-bull laid for a mattress.
Roll'd, to support his head, was a carpet, gleaming in colors.
Standing alone by his side, the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor,
Moving the king with his foot, thus aroused him up, and reproved him.

"Rouse thee up, Tydeus' son!—Is the whole night given to slumber?
Canst not hear, on the swell of the plain how the hosts of the Trojan,
Camp, in the face of the fleet?—how small is the space that divides us?"

Thus did he speak:—and the king right speedily rose at the summons;
Spake in reply to the Elder; and rapidly thus he address'd him.

"Thou art a wonderful man!—though old, never sated of labor!

[b] This would seem to refer rather to the tone and manner than to the words of Odysseus.

Are no younger men to be found, 'mid the sons of Achaia,
Who might perform this task of arousing the princes and leaders,
Traversing all of the camp?—Thou still art a wonder among us!"

Then, in reply to the King, the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"True are thy words, good friend:—thy speech just fits the occasion.
Valiant sons are mine; and I also have people in plenty;
Plenty, besides, there are, who would traverse the host and arouse it;
But it is urgent need that now weighs down the Achaians.
Matters have now come to this, that we stand on the edge of a razor:—
One side death to the sons of Achaia,—the other redemption.
Then go thou and arouse swift Ajax, and mighty Phylides.
For thou'rt younger than I am—so spare me the task I beseech thee."

Thus spake the sage, and the king threw round him the hide of a lion;
Tawny, of ample size; for it reach'd to his feet:—took his jav'lin,
And stood equipp'd to depart:—and he went and awaken'd the others.

So, when the kings arrived where the guard collected together,
Not overcome with sleep there found they the chiefs of the night-watch;
Ready, with arms in their hands, did the guard sit, wakeful and watching.
E'en as the shepherds' dogs keep watch by the close of the sheep-fold,
Hearing the sound of the beast, as it breaks thro' the glades of the forest,
Down from the mountain-peaks; and a terrible tumult around him
Rises, of dogs and men; and sleep flies far from the turmoil:
So on the eyes of the guard had no sweet slumber descended,
Keeping the watch throughout that evil night:—ever turning
Unto the plain, to discover if aught was afoot 'mid the Trojans.
Glad in his heart was the sage, as he saw them alert: and he cheer'd them,
Speaking in words of approval:—and cheerfully thus he address'd them.
"Ever as now, my sons! keep watch.—Let none of your number
Sink overpowered with sleep:—that we be not a joy to the foeman."

Speaking, he enter'd the trench, and the rest of the kings came behind him;
All of the Argive kings, who were called to partake in the council.
With them Merion too, and Nestor's valorous offspring,
Came at the kings' invitation to share with themselves in discussion.
Passing the deep-dug trench, coming up at the side, they ascended
On to the open plain; to a spot which was clear of the corpses,
Fallen in that day's fight;—where the arm of the truculent Hector
Rested from Argive slaughter:—when night came down to preserve them.
Here did they sit them down; and join'd in discourse to each other.
First to them, then spake thus the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"Is there, my gallant friends, any man of such venturesome spirit,
Of such a dauntless mind, as to dare, 'mid the host of the Trojans,
Solely to go?—Perchance he may light on a straggling foeman;
Or, in the Trojan host, he may hear what is current among them,
What themselves devise:—if they venture afar from their homesteads,
Here in the face of the fleet, to abide;—or again in the city
Seek their accustom'd post:—since to-day they have stricken Achaia.
All these things might he learn;—and then, making off, come in safety
Back to the navy again:—high glory would ever await him,
Wide as the sky amid men; and a gift should be ready to grace him.
All of the chiefs who deem they are leaders and princes among us,
Each would readily give him a black[c] ewe sheep as an offering;
Each with a lamb at her side—no gift more special or costly.
And he will rank, evermore, 'mid the first at the feast and the banquet."

Thus did the Elder speak: deep silence fell on his hearers.
Then, unto all of the kings, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

[c] It would appear from this that black sheep were particularly esteemed. Probably because their wool did not require dyeing when manufactured into garments. For the same reason they at the present day bear a higher price than white sheep in some places on the Continent.

"Nestor! the task is mine: for my heart and courage impel me,
Urge me to take this quest, and enter the camp of the foeman;
E'en of the Trojan host.—But if I might have a companion,
It were a thing to support me, and strengthen the courage within me.
Two thus united together, the one in advance of his fellow,
Sees what is best to be done:—and although one alone might discern it,
Yet were his mind less alert to perceive, less firm his decision."

Thus did the hero speak:—full many were eager to join him:
Eager were both the Ajaces, the valorous servants of Àres;
Eager was Merion too, most eager the issue of Nestor:
Eager too was Atrides, the spear-famed chief Menelàus:
Eager to enter the host of the foe was the mighty Odysseus,
Much-enduring chief;—with a brave soul aye in his bosom.
Then, to the whole of these, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"Hear me, O Tydeus' son, Diomèdes! dearest of all men!—
Take what chief thou pleasest, to aid in thy perilous venture:—
Even the best among all of the many who seek to attend thee.
Let not thy mind be persuaded to leave disregarded behind thee,
One, in himself who is better, and go with the worse, from a feeling
That he is nobler-born, or, perchance, more highly descended."

Thus did the monarch speak:—for he fear'd for the fair Menelàus.
Then, in reply to the King, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"If it remains with myself, and you bid me select a companion,
How can I e'er be forgetful of him—of the godlike Odysseus?
His are the prudent courage, and resolute heart, that encounter
Harmless, a host of ills:—thro' the friendship of Pallas Athène.
Let me but go with him, and we safely pursue the adventure,
Back thro' flames of fire—so sound is the strength of his wisdom."

Thus then again, in reply, spake the much-enduring Odysseus.

"Do not, O Tydeus' son! above measure, commend me, or blame me!
Such as I am, thou speakest to those who are conversant with me.
Let us be gone:—for the night wanes fast, and the dawn is approaching.
Over the heavenly plains, have the stars far run; and of darkness
Two full parts are spent:—and the third now only remaineth."

Thus did the warrior speak:—they arm'd them at once for the venture.
Tydeus' offspring received, from the warrior-chief Thrasymedes,
Firstly a two-edged sword—for his own he had left in the galleys.
Then came the shield:—and then did he buckle a casque on his temples;
Fashion'd of tough bull's hide: no plume waved terribly o'er it;
It was a crestless casque: as youths wear rising to manhood.
Merion next bestow'd on Odysseus a bow and a quiver,
Gave too a gleaming sword;—then a headpiece guarding his temples,
Wrought out of solid hide;—stout thongs in a network within it,
Binding it firmly together:—inlaid on the face of the headpiece,
Gleam'd, upon every side, white teeth of a boar of the forest,
Fairly and well arranged—and a soft felt lining within it.
It was the headpiece, once, of Ormenus' son, of Amyntor;
Won, as a trophy from him by Autolycus, storming his castle;
He, as a present, the helm to Amphidamas gave, of Cythèra,
Even in Scandia's walls:—from him 'twas a present to Molus;
Merion took the casque as a gift from his father, and wore it:
Lastly, its ample space came to cover the brows of Odysseus.
So, when accoutred thus, in arms well fitting the venture,
Forth, all alone, they started; the rest left together behind them.
And, at their setting forth, on the right of the path, flew a heron,
Sent from Pallas Athène:—the eye was unable to trace it,
Thro' night's blinding gloom; but they heard the loud clang of the pinions.
Joyfully heard it Odysseus, and pray'd thus aloud to Athène.

"Hear me, O child of Zeus, of the Ægis-armed!—Thou that, always,
Art mine attendant help, 'mid a thousand toils; and mine actions
Ever depend on thee!—Now redouble thy love, O Athène!

Grant us a safe return, thro' the night, to the sides of our galleys;
Big with a mighty deed; some deed that may trouble the Trojans."

Then, in his turn, outspake the redoubtable chief Diomèdes.

"Me too, child of Zeus!—Hear me, O invincible Goddess!
Aid me, now, as of old, thou aidedst my valorous father;
There, in the Theban wall, when he went to the town as a herald;
Leaving Achaia's host all arm'd on the banks of Asopus,
He, to Cadmeia's sons, went vainly a herald of mercy;
Went with soothing words:—but, returning, his actions amazed them;
Wrought by thy help, O Goddess! for thou wert his aid and adviser.
Even as then, oh now, be beside me; and aid and protect me!
So at thy shrine shall perish a heifer of beautiful aspect;
Graced with spreading brows; untamed, and unbroken to tillage.
Such will I slay on thy shrine; having gilded the horns of the victim."

Such was the chieftains' prayer;—and Pallas Athène the prayer heard.
And, having paid their vows to the daughter of Zeus, they proceeded,
Threading the gloom of night—two lions, prowling in darkness,
Over the slaughter-field—amid corpses, and armor, and bloodshed.

Nor were the Trojan leaders permitted by Hector to slumber
Quietly through that night;—but he summon'd the best and the bravest,
Those who the hosts of Troy led in battle and guided in council:
These did he summon together, and warily thus he address'd them.

"Is there, among you all, will do me a deed full of daring?
Do it, for high reward?—Great pay shall be his, for the venture.
For what car is the best, what steeds are strongest and fleetest,
Even of all yon cars and steeds, 'mid the host of Achaia,
His they alone shall remain;—his, too, be the merit and glory;
Who to the hostile host, will pass and return, to inform me
Whether a watch is maintain'd, as formerly, over their galleys;

Or whether, as this day their troops are stricken before us,
They meditate on flight in the ships, and perchance are neglectful
Of the accustom'd watch,—overworn with the toil of the combat."

Thus did the Trojan speak—deep silence fell on his hearers.
There was among those chieftains a son of the herald Eumèdes;
Dolon, his name; endow'd with gold and with brass in abundance:
Not of a well-built form, but of speed unmatch'd in the foot-race:
He was a brotherless son; five sisters only beside him.
He, then, amid Troy's chiefs, stepp'd forward, in answer to Hector.

"Hector! the peril be mine;—my courage pricks me to meet it!
Even to seek yon fleet, and discover the schemes of the foemen.
But raise thou upon high that sceptre; and solemnly swear it;
Swear that the steeds are mine, and that mine is the glittering war-car;
Even the steeds and car that carry Pelides to battle!
So, as no listless scout may I go, without purpose or meaning;
But thro' the hostile host will I pass; till perchance I arrive at
Even Atrides' tent—where the leaders now are assembled,
Ready for deep debate—flight, battle, the points of discussion."

Thus did he speak—and Hector upraised his sceptre, and swore thus.
"Witness it—Zeus thyself!—spouse of Hère!—rolling the thunder!
None of the Trojan host shall be borne by those radiant chargers;
None but Dolon's self:—his, alone, be the fame that attends them."

Thus did the leader swear, by an oath preordained to be futile.
Then did the spy on his shoulder arrange his bow and his arrows;
And, for an outer vest, wrap a warm gray wolf-skin around him:
Donning his helm, fur-lined; and he handled his glittering jav'lin:
Then, from the Trojan host, took the way to the fleet;—never destined
More, to retrace his steps, or to make a report to his leader.
When he had traversed the ranks of his friends, and the lines of the war-steeds,

Eager he press'd along ;—till his tread on the ear of Odysseus
Fell, 'mid the silence round ; who, hearing it, spake to Tydides.

"Some one is moving in front ;—pressing on from the camp of the foemen :—
Either—I know not which—sent out as a spy to the galleys,
Or he is seeking the spoil of the corpses scatter'd around us :
Let us permit him, then, to go past us for some little distance,
Out on the open plain ;—then rush on behind, and secure him,
All at a sudden burst : or if he prove fleeter than we are,
Still, by the help of our spears, we can force him away to the galleys,
Far from the Trojan camp, cutting off his escape to the city."

Thus did the warrior speak, and they quitted the path ; and, for shelter,
Crouch'd amid heaps of dead :—and the spy pass'd rapidly by them.
When he had hurried along for a space which resembled in distance
One day's work for mules[e]—who, in sooth, are more active than oxen
Drawing the heavy plough, through soil newly turn'd by the ploughshare—
Off in pursuit they started :—he heard them, and halted an instant :
Thinking the steps were steps of friends sent away to recall him
Back to the Trojan camp ;—and that Hector himself had despatch'd them.
But, when a jav'lin's cast intervened, or shorter the distance,
Then he perceived them foes : and his knees, well-used to the foot-race,
Turn'd at once to flight ;—they eagerly rush'd to pursue him ;
Even as two fierce hounds, sharp-fang'd, well-season'd for hunting,
Press on a timid hare, or a hind ; and eagerly onward
Drive it, thro' woodland glades, with a death-cry scudding before them ;
Thus did Tydeus' son and Odysseus, waster-of-cities,
Cut off the spy from the camp of his friends ; pressing eagerly onward.
Now, when he all but mixed with the guards at the foot of the ramparts,
Still flying on to the fleet, came a thought from Pallas Athène
Into Tydides' mind ;—lest perchance, some other Achaian
Aim at and strike the scout ;—and himself be but second in glory.

[e] The meaning of this passage seems to be very doubtful.

So, as he brandished his spear, cried aloud the great chief Diomèdes.

"Stand! or my javelin flies in pursuit of thee!—Vain is the effort,
Vain the attempt to escape, from the death this hand can ensure thee."

Speaking he hurl'd his spear; but purposely err'd from the Trojan.
Over his shoulder whistled the bright lance-point, and before him
Stood upright in earth; and he stopp'd, in a panic, beside it;
Quaking with dread: with the teeth all chattering loudly with terror;
Shaking with fear;—and his panting foes, rushing eagerly on him,
Seized him:—and thus with tears he besought, and begg'd their compassion.

"Spare me!—I'll pay for life.—In my house there is wealth in abundance
Brass and gleaming gold, and steel well wrought by the artist.
These will my father send; he will proffer a bountiful ransom,
Soon as he hears that his son is a slave in the fleet of Achaia."

Thus then spake, in reply, the much-suggestive Odysseus.

"Courage! The thought of death do not let it be present before thee!
But do thou tell us at once—taking heed that thou answerest truly—
Why thus here, by thyself, on the path from the host to the navy?
Thus in the gloom of night—when all others are buried in slumber?
Art thou but wandering forth 'mid the corpses to plunder the dead men?
Or art thou here as a spy, sent by Hector, to note what is doing
Here, in the hollow ships?—or did thy courage induce thee?"

Answer'd Dolon thus;—while his limbs all trembled beneath him.

"I am in evil plight; entrapp'd, in my folly, by Hector:
For, he has promised to give me the terrible fleet-footed chargers,
Driven by Peleus' son; and the spoil of his glittering war-car.
And, for this bribe, do I roam, sent by him, thro' the gloom of the midnight;

Seeking to enter your host; and thus to procure information
Whether a watch is maintain'd, as formerly, over your galleys;
Or whether, as this day your troops were stricken before us,
Ye meditate on flight in the ships:—and, perchance, are neglectful
Of your accustom'd watch;—overworn with the toil of the combat."

Then, with a scornful smile, spake the much-devising Odysseus.

"Not by a vulgar prize, has thy mind then, it seems, been affected!—
Those fierce steeds of Pelides are difficult steeds to be master'd,
By mere mortal hands, and unused to submit to the guidance
Of any lord but Achilles:—and he is the son of a Goddess.
But do thou tell us again,—taking heed that thou answerest truly—
Where, on thy going forth, was the post of the warrior Hector?
Where is his armor piled?—And where, for the night, are his war-steeds?
How are the watches set, and reliefs of the herd of the Trojans?
What do they purpose next?—Do they venture, afar from their dwellings,
Still to assail our ships?—Or again, in the walls of their stronghold,
Take up their former post—since to-day they have stricken Achaia?"

Thus, in reply, yet again spake Dolon, son of Eumèdes.

"Yes, I will tell you all; taking heed that I answer you truly!
Hector, and with him those of the chiefs who are members of council,
Fast by the tomb of Ilus, afar from the noise and the tumult,
Hold consultation apart.—For the watches you mention, O hero!
No sure watch is kept nor guard thro' the whole of the army:
Where, upon Trojan hearths, burns the blaze, as necessity bids them,
All are awake and alert; each man keeps watch with his comrades;
All united alike.—But the aids, march'd here from a distance,
Sleep; and the task of watching commit to the care of the Trojans.
—Wives they have none, nor children, who here are dependants upon them."

Spake to the scout then in answer, the much-devising Odysseus.

"Sleep they, then, intermixed with the warrior ranks of the Trojans?
Or by themselves apart?—Speak truth; I am anxious to know it!"

Thus, in reply, yet again spake Dolon, son of Eumèdes.

"Yes, I will tell you all, taking heed that I answer you truly!
Arm'd with their crookèd bows, by the sea, the Peonian levies,
Caucons, and Carians lie, and the Leleges too, and Pelasgi.
Phrygia's gallant troops, and Mœonia's crested contingent,
Mysia's dauntless sons, and the Lycians, slumber by Thymbræ.—
But for what purpose, chiefs! do ye thus so press your inquiries?
If, 'mid the Trojan host, ye are bent on a perilous onslaught,
Far from the others, apart, just arrived, are the Thracian armies:
And, in their midst, is Rhèsus, the king, son of Eïonèus.
His are the fairest steeds I have seen, most goodly in stature:
Whiter their coats than snow;—their pace is swift as the wind-blast.
And for his car itself, it is cover'd with gold and with silver:
And for the armor he wore, it is truly a marvel to gaze on:
All is of solid gold:—such armor a mortal befits not.
It is unfit for man:—only meet for the Gods, the Immortals.
Take me a captive hence to the holds of your sea-cleaving galleys!
Or, and in straitest bonds, let me here but await your returning;
Till you have been on your errand; and tested and proved what I tell you:
Whether I speak but the truth, or whether I try to deceive you."

Then, with a gloomy frown, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Think not a thought of life! tho' perchance it may be, thou hast told us,
Nought but the welcome truth.—Thou now art a captive before us.
Were we to spare thee now, and weakly assent to release thee,
Soon should we find thee again, near the ships of the sons of Achaia,

Playing the spy, once more, if not contending in battle.
But if we slay thee at once, and take life instantly from thee,
Then are we sure that the host never more shall be prejudiced by thee."

Thus did he speak:—and the spy, as he heard, raised his hand in entreaty;
Seeking to stroke his beard[e];—but the edge of the pitiless falchion
Swept down, full on the midst of the neck, cutting sheer through the tendons:
E'en with a prayer on its tongue in the dust roll'd the head of the Trojan[f].
Straightway they stripp'd their dead:—tore the blood-stain'd helm from the temples,
Spear and gray wolf's hide from the body, the bow and the arrows.
These did Odysseus vow to the Goddess Athène the spoiler:
Raised them in air, high aloft; and thus spake in prayer and devotion.

"Hail, Goddess! These are thine! For thee, first of all in Olympus,
Of the immortal Gods, do we worship.—Deign to direct us
Now to the milk-white steeds and the camp of the Thracian sleepers."

Thus did the hero speak; and, speaking, erected the trophy
High—on a tamarisk stem:—and then, that they might not mistake it,
Heap'd up a pile of reeds, and of tamarisk branches around it:
Lest they should miss the spot, as they came thro' the gloom, in returning.
Then press'd onward again, 'mid the corpses, and armor, and carnage;
Until, at last, they came where the ranks of the Thracian levies,
Wearied, slumber'd profound; their glittering armor beside them
Shone on the dark brown earth,—all burnished, piled up in order;
Laid in a triple row:—and the steeds at the head of each warrior.

[e] As a sign of supplication.

[f] This line has been the subject of vexatious criticism. It does not—as has been objected—allege that the head talked after it was cut off: a notion which even Pope's version, "The head yet speaking mutter'd as it fell," would seem to countenance: but merely that the head was severed in the very act of utterance. Under such circumstances, however, it is possible that the last accents might, by the fraction of a moment, succeed the instant of decapitation.

Rhèsus slept in the midst of his host! and his swift-footed war-steeds,
Tied by the reins to the rim of his war-car, slumber'd beside him.
First did Odysseus mark him, and spake to the brave Diomèdes.

"There is the man himself, Diomèdes; there are the war-steeds;
As they were all described by the spy whose life we have taken.
Then let us act at once:—no time to be idle in harness:—
Use thy strength to the utmost.—Do thou go loosen the war-steeds.
Or, slay the soldiers around, and I will attend to the war-steeds."

Thus did the warrior speak:—and his friend, well-nerved by Athène,
Slaughter'd, on every side.—One long deep groan of the dying
Rose, as his falchion struck:—and the blood ran streaming around him.
E'en like a lion that falls on a flock when absent the shepherd,
Goats or full-fleeced sheep, with an evil purpose among them,
So on the Thracian host, in his strength, fell mighty Tydides;
Till he had slaughter'd twelve:—and his comrade the wary Odysseus,
When standing over a man had Tydides stricken and slain him,
Him, laying hold of his feet, did Odysseus, dragging him backward,
Move, on one side; all intent in his mind that the radiant war-steeds
Might unimpeded pass from the camp, nor be scared and affrighted
Treading on heaps of dead;—for as yet they were strangers to corpses.
And when at last at the side of the monarch stood Diomèdes—
Twelve of his people slain—him, lastly he slaughter'd beside them,
Heavily breathing:—for all night long stood a spectre above him,
Like unto Tydeus' son;—sent to trouble his sleep by Athène.
All this while was Odysseus at work releasing the war-steeds:
And, with the reins gather'd up, he conducted them out of the concourse,
Urging them on with his bow:—for the glittering scourge was forgotten,
Left in the radiant car:—in his haste he forgat to remove it.
Then gave a long low hiss, as a signal to brave Diomèdes.
He stood uncertain awhile;—scheming some more doughty achievement.
Whether to drag off the car where the glittering armor was lying,
Drawing it off by the pole, or by main force seize and upheave it,

Or on the Thracian ranks turn again in renewal of slaughter.
Doubtful awhile he stood :—in his pause came the Goddess Athène ;
Stood by Tydides' side, and near at hand she address'd him.

"Think of thy safe return,—thou son of magnanimous Tydeus,
Back to the hollow ships !—Ere thy path is surrounded by dangers ;
Ere some hostile God take alarm, and awaken the Trojans."

Thus did the Goddess speak :—and he heard the advice, and obey'd it ;
Sprang on the steeds in haste :—when mounted, the bow of Odysseus
Urged them along ;—and they rapidly flew to the fleet of Achaia.

Nor was an idle watch maintain'd by the archer Apollo :
Well he discern'd how Athène had gone to the side of Tydides ;
And he descended in wrath, and he enter'd the host of the Trojans :
There he Hippocöon roused, who was one of the Thracian council ;
Kinsman, and gallant friend of the king.—He, arising from slumber,
Saw but an empty space where at eve were the swift-footed war-steeds ;
Saw too his slaughter'd friends, all gasping in carnage around him.
Then did he groan aloud ;—and he call'd on his friend in his anguish ;
And 'mid the Trojan host the alarm increased, and the tumult ;
All rush'd wildly around—and view'd with terror and wonder,
That which the foes had done, ere making retreat to the navy.

But as the chiefs arriv'd where Hector's scout had been slaughter'd,
Then did the Zeus-loved hero Odysseus rein up the war-steeds ;
And, springing down to the ground, Diomèdes seizing the trophy,
Gave up the spoil to his friend ; and then remounting the coursers,
Urged them again to speed ; and they flew right willingly onward,
Straight to the hollow ships :—for they look'd to the end of their journey.
Nestor, the tramp of hoofs first heard, and spake to his fellows.

"Tell me, my friends !—Great leaders, and counsellors too, of the Argives—
Am I mistaken or not ? Be it fancy or not, I must speak it.

Full on my ear from afar falls the quicken'd trample of horse-hoofs.
Fain would I hope that Odysseus and brave Diomèdes, returning
Thus, from the Trojan camp, drive fleet-footed chargers before them;
Yet, more strongly than hope, do I fear that the best of the Argives,
Caught by the rabble of Troy, have met with a fatal adventure."

Scarcely the words were said, when the chiefs made their appearance;
Sliding to earth from the steeds, and their comrades eagerly met them,
Both with right hands pledged, and accents of congratulation:
First, then, question'd the chiefs the Gerenian chivalrous Nestor.

"Tell me, thou subtle Odysseus, thou boast of the sons of Achaia,
Where did ye win these steeds?—Have ye been to the camp of the Trojans,
And have ye brought them thence?—Or did a God bring and present them?
Like to the rays of the sun are their coats in beauty and brightness.
I am for ever seen in the Trojan ranks; and submit not
Yet to abide in the fleet; though an old man, now, for a soldier;
But such steeds as these,—mine eyes never yet have beheld them[g]:
And, I should rather guess, that a God has bestow'd them upon you:
For that ye both are beloved of the great God, rolling the storm-cloud:
And of the child of Zeus, of the blue-eyed virgin Athène."

Then, in reply to the sage, spake the much-devising Odysseus.

"Nestor! Neleus' son! thou glory of all the Achaians!
Easy the task had been for a God, had he wish'd, to have graced us,
Giving us fairer steeds; of a race unsurpass'd as the donor's.
As to the steeds ye behold, they are new arrivals among us:
They are of Thracian blood: whose monarch, the brave Diomèdes
Slew, 'mid his sleeping host;—twelve chiefs lie gasping beside him.
And, in addition to these, is a spy slain close to the galleys;

[g] It will be remembered that the contingent of Rhesus had only just arrived.

One whom Hector's self, and the rest of the chiefs of the Trojans,
Sent, from the hostile camp, to discover the state of the army."

Thus did the hero speak; and exultingly, over the broad trench
Guided the steeds; and with joy came the rest of the chiefs of Achaia.
And when they thence arrived at the well-built tent of Tydides,
There, they the steeds pull'd up; and they tied them fast by the head-stalls
All in the spacious stables, the stables where brave Diomèdes
Housed all the rest of his steeds, and they champ'd good barley in plenty.
But, on his galley's poop, were the spoils of the spy, by Odysseus,
Placed, blood-stain'd, as a trophy, as vow'd to the Goddess Athène.
Then did the chiefs themselves seek relief from their toil, in the ocean;
Washing the clinging sweat from their necks, and their limbs, and their bodies.
And when the salt sea-wave had carried away the pollution,
—All of their flesh well cleansed, and their hearts all brisken'd within them—
Then in a polish'd bath they a last dip took to refresh them;
And when they both had bath'd, and their bodies were wash'd and anointed,
Down to the meal they sat;—and then, to the Goddess Athène,
Pour'd, from brimming bowls, rich wine in a grateful oblation.

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

Shows how, in front of the fight, was the great King seen—Agamemnon.

Now, from Tithonus' side, from the couch of her Lord, had Aurora
Risen on earth; and again brought light unto men and Immortals:
When, by the word of Zeus, to the swift-sailing ships of Achaia,
Came Eris, baneful Goddess:—her hands bore signal of battle:
Taking her post high aloft, on the huge black bark of Odysseus;
Right in the central host—thence easiest heard upon all sides;
On one side to the tents of the great Telamonian Ajax:
And on the other side to Achilleus' tents:—for the outpost
Stations were always theirs, on their manhood and valor reliant.
There, high posted aloft, loud, fearfully, shouted the Goddess;
Shouted her song of battle; infusing courage and daring,
Into Achaia's sons, and insatiable ardor for combat.
All of a sudden, war seems something to smile and rejoice at;
Sweeter, by far, than flight, back again to the land of their fathers.

Then, did the word go forth from Atrides, bidding his Argives
Arm themselves for the fight:—himself girt his armor about him.
First, on his stalwart legs did he fasten the greaves; all in silver
Shone, on the edge of the armor, the hasps where it fitted together.
Then, on his dauntless breast, did he buckle the fence of the cuirass;
Cyneras, Cyprian prince, sent the gift, as a token of friendship:
For, in his native land, 'twas told how the sons of Achaia
Threaten'd, with countless ships, to descend on the shores of the Troad:
Therefore he sent this gift; as a means to win grace of the monarch.

Shone of the dark blue steel ten circles of scales in the margin;
Then came twelve of gold; and twenty of tin in the centre.
Fashioned of dark-blue steel, three snakes on a side, on the surface,
Wreath'd, into one, their necks :—of Iridian tints, as the rainbow,
Placed by the son of Zeus, high aloft as a token to mortals.
Then, from his shoulders broad, he suspended the sword;—all bestudded
Thick with stars of gold;—but slumbering yet in the scabbard,
Moulded of burnished silver; the belt was gold, and the hangers.
Then took his ample shield, and it cover'd him fully; resplendent
Glitter'd the buckler's face; ten brazen circlets around it:
And, in the target's field, were twice ten bosses of metal:
And, of the dark blue steel[a], was a large boss, full in the centre.
Full on the face of the buckler the head of the terrible Gorgon
Glared there, horror-crown'd.—Fear, Flight, the attendants upon it.
And to sustain his shield was a baldric of silver :—the handle
Writh'd as a steel-scaled snake: and the heads of the radiant monster,
Spread from a single neck, in threefold horrors beneath it.
Then on his temples shone the high helmet, tufted with horsehair,
Graced with a fourfold cone;—with a crest nodding terribly o'er it.
Then took two strong spears; well temper'd of brass were the spear-points;
Bright and keen; and the gleam of the brass from the points unto heaven
Flash'd, as the monarch moved. And then from Athène and Hère
Roll'd long peals of thunder; to honor the King of Mycenæ.

Then, did the Argive leaders command their trusty attendants,
Bidding them range their steeds in a line, within the intrenchment;
While in compacted strength, their lords, clad in glittering armor,
Rush'd to the field of fight.—Wild shouts rent the gray of the morning.
Close to the trenches' edge were the legions marshall'd in order;
Hard in the rear were the cars :—and then, by command of Cronïon,
Rose up a mournful tumult: the God, himself, from the heavens
Rain'd on the mournful field thick blood-stain'd drops :—for he purposed

[a] It seems to be doubtful what metal was really here intended. See, on the metals of the shield, Gladstone's Homer, vol. iii, p. 496.

Many a crested head that day should be levell'd to Hades.

Troy, on the adverse side, on a swell of the plain, had her armies;
Led by the stalwart Hector; Polydamas, notable hero;
And by the son of Anchises, revered as a God by the people;
And by Antènor's offspring, by Polybus brave, and Agènor;
Acamas too, with them, fair-form'd as the blessed Immortals.
Hector amid their van, with a round shield glancing before him,
Moved; as the baleful star, upon high, through rents of the storm-cloud,
Glimmers and then disappears; as the black scud sails over heaven:
So, 'mid the foremost ranks, now Hector was seen for an instant;
Now, in the serried array was he lost;—and the gleam of his harness,
Flash'd, as the lightning-blaze, from Zeus, from the Ægis-wielder.

As, in the harvest-field, when the reapers, facing each other[b],
Reap down standing corn, on the land of a wealthy retainer,
Wheat, or bearded grain;—and the heap'd shocks tumble before them;
So did Achaia's sons and the Trojans, eager for carnage,
Meet in the slaughter-field.—No man had a thought of retreating.
Equally tower'd their crests in the fight;—and, together, like wild wolves,
Hurtled the hostile ranks;—Eris joyfully stood and beheld them.
Eris alone of the Gods was permitted to share in the combat:
Nor, unto either host, did the rest of the Gods give assistance;
They unassisting sat, in celestial homes; in the mansions
Fashion'd for each great God, in the deep-folded skirts of Olympus.
There did they sit incensed at the great God, whirler-of-storm-clouds,
Grieved at the heavenly will, giving glory and strength to the Trojans.
Little for them reck'd the Father of all; who in haughty retirement,
Proud of his unmatch'd might, sat apart from the others; observing
Troy's fair fortress-town, and the fleet of the sons of Achaia;
Watching the flash of arms, and the tumult of victors and vanquish'd.

[b] The reapers were usually divided into two parties, who commenced at opposite sides of the field, and so worked to the centre.

While dawn brighten'd to day, and the sacred morn was ascendant,
Fell on each army, the storm of the darts; and slain were the people.
But, when the hour arrived, when a woodcutter, ceasing from labor,
Spreads his morning meal on the turf, in the glades of a mountain,
Easing his hand from toil, 'mid trees lying levell'd around him,
And, with cessation of labor, comes appetite pleasantly on him;
Then, with an innate courage, the Danai, serried together,
Broke, with a shout, through the armies of Troy;—and the King Agamemnon,
Charged in the van:—and he slaughter'd a chieftain, the mighty Bienor;
Slaughter'd the chieftain himself; then Oileus, guiding his war-steeds:
Him, leaping down from the steeds, o'er his lord, in hot haste to avenge him,
Fierce as he dash'd into fight, the great King, with the point of his jav'lin,
Struck, on the warrior's forehead.—The solid brass of the headpiece,
Parted beneath that blow—thro' helmet and skull went the spear-point,
Smashing the brain within, and quenching his ardor for battle.
Them, as they fell and died—did he leave—did the King Agamemnon—
Leave, with their white breasts bare; for he rent from their shoulders the bright mail.
Then did he turn in his wrath, upon Antiphus, and upon Isus;
Priam's children both—this lawful, and that was a bastard:
One car bore them both; and the bastard guided the chargers:
Antiphus, gallant chief, stood arm'd by his side. These Achilleus
Late, 'mid the glades of Ida, had found, and with fetters of osiers
Bound them amid their flocks; but had yielded them up for a ransom.
These did the issue of Atreus, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
Slaughter—impaling one with his spear thro' the breast; of the other,
Antiphus, cleaving the head, with the trenchant blade of his broadsword.
Hastily tore off the victor the glittering armor, and naked
Recognised both of the dead; he had seen them before in the galleys,
When they abided there, as the captives of mighty Achilleus.
As when a lion lights upon fawns while the mother is absent,
Rends his helpless prey, and his strong teeth tear them asunder,

E'en in the lair of the hind, and the weak lives end of the victims:
She, if she chance to approach to the scene, all unable to help them,
Stands for a moment in grief and in fear—her limbs quiver beneath her;
Then, turning round, far away thro' the glades and the thick of the forest,
Bounds with streaming sides, and her fear hears the beast close behind her;
So did the sons of Troy, view helpless the deaths of the brothers;
So they their own fate fear'd at the hands of the sons of Achaia.

Then did Pisander die, and Hippolochus, train'd to the combat;
Children were they of the crafty Antimachus; whom Alesander,
Bribed, above all, with gold; for he took it, and serving him for it,
Counsell'd Helen's stay; and forbade her return to Atrides.
His two sons in the battle, did then the great King Agamemnon,
Meet, as in one car carried they ranged thro' the field; and endeavor'd
Wildly to master the steeds.—For the reins they had dropp'd in confusion;
All unnerved with fear: when in front of the car—as a lion—
Rush'd on Atreus' son; and they fell on their knees and besought him.

"O son of Atreus, spare us!—and take the rich price of the ransom!
For there is treasure heap'd, where Antimachus lives, in abundance;
Brass, and gleaming gold, and steel well-wrought by the artist.
These will our father give; he will proffer a bountiful ransom,
Soon as he hears his sons live, slaves, in the fleet of Achaia."

Thus, with tears, did the youths make prayer to the terrible monarch:
Make it with soothing words;—right rough was his terrible answer.

"So then!—And *ye* are the sons of Antimachus? He, who, in council,
When, to the Trojan town, long ago, the good king Menelàus
Went with a message of peace, with the godlike leader Odysseus,
Counsell'd to slay them both; nor permit their return to Achaia!—
Now, pay a penalty, meet for the sin of your murderous father."

Speaking, he dash'd from the car Pisander to earth; and the jav'lin
Pinn'd, as he lay supine, his breast to the soil, and impaled him.
Forth, to escape, did Hippolochus rush;—but the King was upon him,
Ere he arrived at earth—lopp'd his hands; and, afar, from his shoulders,
Sever'd his bleeding head;—and it rolled as a ball thro' the battle.
These where they fell, did he leave; and in front, where the press was the thickest,
Ever the King rush'd on, and, behind him, his men of Achaia.
Foot, in headlong flight, rush'd, trampling foot; and the chariots
Clash'd on surrounding cars:—while, around them, the dust, in a whirlwind,
Rose from the trodden plain; 'neath the thundering hoofs of the war-steeds.
Sounded the rending brass:—and, behind them, the King Agamemnon
Came on, with slaughter, and shout, and with cry of command to his Argives.
As the devouring flame, which enters the depths of a forest,
Borne by a strong wind onward, the woodlands wastes; and in ashes
Tumble the full-topp'd trees, 'neath the blast of the great conflagration;
So, on that day, 'neath the arm of Atrides, the King Agamemnon,
Tumbled the crests of the Trojans in flight; and the high-mettled chargers
Dash'd, with emptied cars, all abroad thro' the ranks of the battle.
No hands now to direct them: afar, 'mid the wreck of the army,
Lie their lifeless lords:—now dearer to crows than to consorts.

Hector, by Zeus restrain'd, far apart from the dust and the weapons,
Stood—far away from the scene of blood, and the slaughter, and tumult;
While, on his broken host, press'd Atrides, cheering his soldiers.
And unto Ilus' tomb, son of Dardanus, hard by the oak-trees,
Right in the central plain, were the fugitives crowded together,
Eager to gain their town; and behind, with slaughter and shouting,
Rush'd on Atreus' son; with hands all spatter'd with carnage.
But when the foremost came to the Scæan gates and the oak-trees,
There they perforce turn'd round, and awaited their fugitive comrades.
These, on the open plain, ranged wildly in flight; as the oxen
Flee from the lion's paw: when the beast, in the gloom after sunset,

Scatters the crowded herd; yet singles one for destruction:—
Breaking its mighty neck; and with strong teeth rending the muscles,
Until the victim sinks—then gorges on blood and on entrails.
So did the mighty Atrides, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
Follow the flying foes, still seizing and slaying the hindmost.
Many that day came down supine in the dust from their war-steeds
'Neath his unconquer'd hands:—'neath the stroke of his terrible weapon.
But when the routed troops were about to re-enter the town-wall,
Crowding within their rampart, the Father of Gods and of mortals
Came unto Ida's mount, to her hill-tops streaming with fountains;
Came from the heavens on high; in his right hand wielding the lightning:
And thus gave his command to the golden-wing'd messenger Iris.

"Iris! swift of wing! hence speedily!—Tell it to Hector!
Tell him that while he discerns Agamemnon, shepherd-of-people,
Raging amid his troops, and wasting the ranks of his army,
He's to refrain from fight; but cheer on the soldiers about him,
Ever to face their foes, and strive in the doubtful engagement.
But when he sees yon King, sore stricken by arrow or spear-point,
Mount on his car and fly, then vigor from me shall inspire him;
Making him slay his foes, till he stands in the front of the galleys;
Until the sun sinks down, and darkness solemnly follows."

Such were the words of Zeus; and the wind-footed Goddess obey'd him.
Down to the sacred town, did she glide from the summit of Ida;
There did she find Troy's chief, Priam's son, the redoubtable Hector,
Standing amid his hosts, 'mid the press of the cars and the war-steeds:
And by the warrior's side came the Goddess, and thus she address'd him.

"Hector! Son of the King! Zeus scarcely astuter in counsel!
Father Zeus, himself, has sent me to speak and exhort thee:
That, what time thou seest Agamemnon, shepherd-of-people,
Raging amid thy troops, and wasting the ranks of thine army,
Thou'rt to refrain from fight; yet cheer on the soldiers about thee,

Ever to face their foes, and to strive in the doubtful engagement.
But when thou seest yon King, sore stricken by arrow or spear-point,
Mount on his car and fly, then vigor from Zeus shall inspire thee;
Making thee slay thy foes, till thou standest in front of the galleys;
Until the sun sinks down, and darkness solemnly follows."

Thus spake the swift-wing'd Goddess, then parted from earth to the heavens.
Hector, arm'd as he was, leap'd down from the height of his war-car;
Brandishing two sharp spears; and he traversed the ranks of his army,
Urging his men to the fight: and the battle rekindled around him.
Round came his flying troops; and stood firm, facing Achaia:
And, on the other side, the Achaians serried the phalanx.
Raged then the battle again; rank to rank; and the King Agamemnon
Charged in Achaia's front;—ever eager to fight in the vanguard.

Tell me, ye Muses divine! ye who dwell in the homes of Olympus!
Who of the Trojan host, of the wide-gathered aids of the Trojan,
Dared to encounter, first, Agamemnon boldly in battle?
It was Antenor's offspring, Iphidamas, bulky in stature,
Valorous chief: he was nurtured in Thracia, studded with sheepfolds.
Cissès, sire of his mother, Theano daintily-featured,
Nursed, in his distant home, when he was but an infant, the stripling;
And when, mature of age, he arrived at the measure of manhood,
Still he retain'd the youth: and he gave him his daughter in marriage.
Scarce had he claimed his bride, when he heard of the war with Achaia;
And, to his own land, came in twelve dark vessels to aid her.
These on Percope's strand did he leave; and the rest of the journey,
E'en unto Ilion's wall, with his host came on as a footman.
He was the first who dared to encounter Atrides in battle.
So when, approaching nearer, the foes confronted each other,
First flew Atrides' spear; but it glanced by the side of the Trojan.
Then, on the belt of the King, did Iphidamas, under the cuirass,
Strike; and, with powerful arm, bear hard on the spear to impel it.

Yet was the belt not pierced—for the harden'd plates of its silver
Turn'd up the lance's point; like soft lead yielding before them.
Then, laying hold of the spear with his hand, the great King Agamemnon,
Lion-like, drew his foe within reach,—wrench'd the spear from his hard grasp;
Wrench'd—and then, on his neck, came the sweep of the terrible broad-sword.
Fainting he sank in dust:—and a wakeless sleep overcame him;
Slain, in his country's cause, far away from his beautiful consort;
Far from his youthful wife; having little received, though he gave much;
Gave her a hundred steers, and had promised thousands beside them;
Goats and full-fleeced sheep; from the well-stored flocks of his pastures.
Yet did Atrides' son, Agamemnon, vanquish and slay him;
Bearing, in pride, his spoils, high aloft, 'mid the ranks of Achaia.

Cöon, Antènor's son, his eldest, was near and beheld it;—
Chief of distinguished fame.—Deep grief for his brother's bereavement
Fill'd his dauntless heart, and brought hot tears to his eyelids.
Stealthily, unperceived, with his weapon, approaching the monarch,
Straight on his naked arm, he the lance thrust, under the elbow,
Thrust, till the shining point stood bare and bloody beyond it.
Thrill'd with a pang of anguish the King of men, Agamemnon;
Yet, unconquer'd still, not as yet disabled from combat,
Brandish'd his mighty spear, and came with a rush on the Trojan.
Seizing his brother's corpse by the foot, he attempted to drag it
Into the Trojan lines; and their chiefs invoked, for assistance.
But, as he tugg'd at the body, the King, 'neath the rim of his buckler,
Plung'd in his flank the spear;—his limbs sank fainting beneath him:
Over the corpse he fell; and his head, 'neath the sword of the great King,
Roll'd in the blood-stain'd dust.—So died, by the arm of Atrides,
Two of Antènor's sons, both bound on one journey to Hades.

Then, with his spear and falchion, and masses of stone, did the victor
Ravage the hostile ranks, so long as his hurt was but recent,

And while the blood yet flow'd, fresh and warm, from the mouth of the red wound;
But when the hæmorrhage ceased, and the wound grew stiff and unyielding,
Grinding pangs invaded the courage and strength of Atrides:
As when the pointed shafts of the Goddesses Eilythieæ,
—Hère's daughters they, who rule o'er the anguish of childbirth,—
Strike, when her hour is come, on the frame of the mother expectant;
So did the grinding pangs quell courage and strength in Atrides.
Straightway in frenzy he mounted his car; and he bade his attendant
Drive to the hollow ships; for his heart was distracted in frenzy:
And, to the Danaan hosts, thus he shouted, fiercely and loudly.

"Friends! who the Argives lead into battle, and guide in the council!
Let it be now your task, from the side of our sea-cleaving galleys,
Still to repel our foes:—for Zeus no longer permits me
Here to abide in the field, and to fight all day with the Trojans."

Thus did the monarch speak; fell the lash on the fair-coated war-steeds,
Urging them on to the ships; and they eagerly bounded before it;
—Foam on their glossy necks, and the dust thick-coated beneath them—
Thus did they carry away their wounded lord from the battle.
But when Hector saw thus Atrides leaving the combat,
Loudly the Trojan ranks, and the Lycian troops he exhorted.

"Trojans! Lycians too! and ye Dardans, famous in close-fight!
Play ye the man, my friends; and remember your former achievements!
Lo, the commander flies; and to me are the fame and the glory
Given by Father Zeus.—Then the strong hoofs urge of your war-steeds,
Full on the Danaan ranks—and attain a more excellent glory."

Thus spake the Trojan chief; exciting their valor and prowess.
As, in the woodland chase, when the dogs are cheer'd by the hunter
On to a great wild-boar, or e'en on the terrible lion:
So on the Argive ranks, were the Trojans, mighty in valor,

Urged by the son of Priam, by Hector the rival of Àres.
He, 'mid the foremost ranks, stalk'd on, great projects within him,
Bearing down on the fight, as the squall, on a turbulent ocean,
Swoops, from a storm-swept sky, and whitens the blue of the waters.

Who was the first that day, who last, in unequal encounter,
Slaughter'd by Hector's arm; when Zeus conceded him glory?
First did Autonous die, then Assæus fell, and Opìtes:
Dolops, Clytys' son, and Opheltius, and Agelàus;
Orus, Æsymnus too, and Ipponous, train'd to the combat;
These did he slay of chiefs:—and then, of the Danaan soldiers,
Perish'd a nameless crowd:—as the west-wind, heavy with vapors,
Meeting the gloom-clad south, with a whirlwind tearing before it,
Rolls on the swelling waves, and the spray from the crests of the billows,
Drives through the troubled air, 'neath the blast of the furious tempest;
So sank the Argive chiefs, that day, 'neath the prowess of Hector.

Then had been carnage all, great deeds had been wrought in the battle;
Then, in dismay, to the ships had been driven the sons of Achaia;
But unto Tydeus' son, Diomèdes, utter'd Odysseus.

"Why, do we thus forget, in misfortune, the prowess we once had?
Here let us stand, and the foemen encounter again!—It were shameful,
Were we to lose our fleet, and Hector's arm were to gain it."

Then, in reply to his friend, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Ready am I to remain, and to peril the worst; but I fear me,
Ours are scanty gains:—for the God, great roller-of-storm-clouds,
Strengthens Troy this day, as he formerly strengthen'd the Argives."

Speaking he hurl'd his lance, and he struck to the earth, from his war-car,
Piercing him right thro' the breast, Thymbræus;—while his attendant,

Molion, godlike chief, fell struck by the spear of Odysseus.
These, overthrown, they left—never more to take part in the combat—
And on the hostile ranks charged ;—routing the press :—as the onslaught
Made by two great wild-boars, which charge on the dogs that pursue them.
So, the two Argive chiefs, charged, routing the foes :—and Achaia
Breath'd yet again in flight from the arm of the terrible Hector.
Warriors and car alike, then they conquer'd two heads of the people,
Merops' sons, of Percote ; a great seer, one above all men,
Blest with prophetic vision ; and much had he warn'd and dissuaded
Both of his sons from the ravenous war :—but they heard and obey'd not ;
Scorning their father's warning, by fate led on to destruction.
These, then, did Tydeus' offspring, the spear-famed chief Diomèdes,
Spoil of their life and strength, and he stripp'd from their shoulders the bright arms.
Gallant Hippodamus died, and Hypeirochus too, by Odysseus.

Then did Cronïon Zeus, as he look'd on the battle from Ida,
Straiten the bonds of fight ;—both sides slew foemen before them.
Tydeus' son, with his spear, slew Agastrophus, offspring of Pæon ;
Goring the chief in the groin :—far away from his side were his war-steeds,
No chance left of flight ;—far away, as their lord had commanded,
Under his servants' charge ;—while he upon foot, in the vanguard,
Mixed in the foremost fight—and paid with life for his daring.
Hector beheld him fall, and he dash'd through the ranks, to avenge him,
Dash'd with his cry of battle,—behind him the throng of the Trojans.
Nor was his course unwatched by the valorous chief Diomèdes ;
Turning him round he address'd thus Odysseus, combating near him.

"See, how the war-wave surges along !—Fierce Hector upon it !
Here let us stand his shock ;—and await for his terrible onset."

Brandishing then he discharged his far-shadowing spear at the Trojan :
Nor did he miss his mark ;—but the foe struck fair on the helmet,

Right on the top of the crest.—From brass, glanced brass of the spear-point:
Nor was his fair flesh touch'd;—but he stood unharm'd in his helmet,
Crown'd with a threefold crest:—bright present of Phœbus Apollo:
So did he shun his fate, and retreated again to his people;
And as he sank on his knees, his strong hand planted beneath him,
Bore up his form from the earth; and a mist floated over his eyeballs.
But while Tydeus' son followed up in pursuit of his jav'lin,
Far 'mid the hostile ranks, where it stood, earth-rooted and buried,
Hector recover'd his breath, and away, remounting his chariot,
Drove to the Trojan press, and the black fate shunn'd that approach'd him.
While, with recover'd spear, thus shouted the great Diomèdes.

"Dog! Thou hast managed again to escape from the death!—But destruction
Threaten'd thee nearly!—Though Fate is averted by Phœbus Apollo,
Ever adjured, as he is, when thou facest the clash of the lances.
Yet, if again we encounter, this hand will assuredly slay thee,
If amid all of the Gods I can count upon one to assist it.
Now for the rest of Troy—let them come as they may, I assail them."

Thus did he speak; and he turn'd to the spoil of the offspring of Pæon.
Then did the spouse of the fair-tress'd Helen, the prince Alesander,
Crouching in rear of the tomb of a man once a leader of nations,
Ilus, offspring of Dardanus,—hid by the column that crown'd it,—
Bend his revengeful bow on Tydides, shepherd-of-people,
While he was stripping the spoils of Agastrophus, tearing the corslet
From his intrepid breast, and the shield from the breadth of his shoulders,
And from his temples the helm;—and, bending his weapon against him,
With no devious aim, sent a shaft from his bow; for it struck him
Full on the arch of the foot:—right through went the furious arrow
Into the earth beneath:—and the Trojan, with laughter and insult,
Sprang from his hiding-place, and boastfully taunted the hero.

"Ha! Thou'st felt it now!—Would, to Heaven, the point of the weapon

Lay buried, deep in thy body—as deep as the life that is in thee!
So, would the sons of Troy breathe again from the danger that haunts them;
Though at thy face they fly, as goats from the face of a lion."

Calmly, and undismay'd, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Scurrilous fighter-afar! curly-headed seducer of women!
Hazard a nearer fight!—Stand boldly in arms and oppose me!
Bow, and well-stored quiver, would then, but little avail thee.
Having but scratch'd my foot, thou'rt boasting as now;—but I deem it
Only a thing of nought—as the blow of a child or a woman.
Blunt is the weapon's point that is borne by a spiritless dastard.
Different, far, is the fate of the foe whom the point of my jav'lin
Touches, though but to graze:—fate instantly seizes upon him:
Pale are his consort's cheeks; all torn and disfigured in anguish:
Orphans surround his board: he himself, on the earth he has redden'd,
Lies, a corrupting corpse; more dear to the crows than his consort."

Thus did the warrior speak; and Odysseus, hastening near him,
Stood in his comrade's front;—while he, sitting shelter'd behind him,
Drew from his instep the arrow.—A pang of anguish succeeded:
All in a frenzy he mounted his car; and he bade his attendants
Drive to the hollow ships; for his heart was distracted within him.
Now, on the battle-field, was Odysseus alone; not an Argive
Near him:—none remain'd:—for a panic had scatter'd the armies:
And then, in dire distress, spake he thus to himself, and debated.

"What course now to adopt?—To retreat were a shame, and a scandal,
Scared by the hostile host.—Yet worse to be uselessly slaughter'd,
Thus by myself unaided:—for Zeus has affrighted the Argives.
But, to what purpose, thus, do I proffer these questions within me?
I am assured of this,—only dastards retreat from a battle:
He who would win a name as excelling in fight, must be mindful
Both to endure and dare, prompt either to strike or be stricken."

Thus, as the wary king spake, rousing the courage within him,
Nearer, and yet more near, drew the shielded ranks of the Trojans;
Circling round and round; and enclosing fate in the centre.
As when the full-mouth'd bands of the dogs, and adventurous hunters,
Harass a great wild-boar, and the beast, from the depths of the woodland,
Charges his shouting foes; his tusks churn foam:—the assailants
Clustering all around;—and the gnash of his tusks, 'mid the tumult,
Rises up loud and harsh, yet they fear not the might of the monster:
So did the Trojan ranks on the Zeus-loved leader, Odysseus,
Gather with fell intent.—Down, first, went Dèiopìtes,
Gored underneath his shoulder; the spear pass'd through to the back-bone.
Thoas he slaughter'd next: then Ennomus sank with a death-wound:
Then was Chersidamas slain:—as he leap'd to the earth from his war-steeds,
Under his buckler's rim, thro' the navel, the spear of Odysseus
Drove: and he roll'd in dust, and tore at the earth in the death-pang.
These did he leave in blood; then slew, with a thrust of his jav'lin,
Charops, Hippasus' offspring, redoubtable brother of Socus.
Socus, godlike leader, was nigh, and he rush'd to avenge him;
Came within striking reach; paused fronting his foe, and address'd him.

"Chief of unrivall'd fame, versed in toil and each subtle invention,
Either must thou, this day, win a double triumph, and vanquish
Two of Hippasian race, and tear from our shoulders the bright spoils,
Or, on my lance's point, must perish thyself in the battle."

Thus did the warrior speak; and his spear drove hard on the buckler.
Right thro' the shining orb went the weapon, and glancing beneath it
Pierced, in its furious course, through the damascene work of the corslet,
Ripping the flesh right away from the ribs:—but the care of Athène
Guided the lance's point, nor allow'd it to injure the entrails.
Well did Odysseus know that the spear had not fatally pierced him:
And, back bearing a pace, thus spake stern menace to Socus.

"Wretch! it is only for thee, that fate sweeps gloomily o'er us!

Me, thou perchance hast forced to relinquish fight for an instant:
But, for thine hapless self, death, doom, are imminent o'er thee,
Death upon this same day.—This spear, that I level against thee,
Gives me the fame of thy fate, and thy soul to the region of Hades."

Thus did Odysseus speak:—and his foe, in a fatal confusion,
Turn'd him around for flight:—as he turn'd, came the head of the jav'lin
Right 'mid his shoulder-blades;—and the point stood bare from his bosom.
Thundering he fell to the earth:—thus gloried the mighty Odysseus.

"Socus! redoubted chief, son of Hippasus, tamer-of-war-steeds!
Thus thou hast found thy fate; vain all thine attempts to evade it!
Wretch as thou art! unto thee shall no father give funeral honors:
No mother close thine eyelids.—The ravenous craw of the vultures—
Flapping their wings as they rend at their prey—is the tomb that awaits thee.
But when I die, my grave shall be made by the mighty Achaians."

Thus did the warrior speak—and he wrench'd then the weapon of Socus,
Forth from his wounded side, and the well-boss'd orb of his buckler.
Fast, as he drew it forth, flow'd blood from the wound; and his spirit
Fail'd; and the sons of Troy, when they look'd on the blood of Odysseus,
Call'd one another on, and bore in a body against him.
He, in his need retreated, and shouted for aid to his comrades;
Thrice did he shout for aid, thrice raising his voice to the utmost;
Thrice was the clamor heard by the Àres-loved Menelàus;
Who, on the instant, spake unto Ajax combating near him.

"Ajax! high-born chief, son of Telamon, ruler of nations!
I can distinguish a sound like the distant voice of Odysseus;
As if the valorous chief were alone, and in imminent danger;
Deep in the ranks of Troy, cut off in the dangerous contest.
Then let us enter the press; 'twere a deed full of merit to aid him.
Much do I fear, that alone, strong, brave as he is, he may suffer
Wrong at the hands of Troy.—Then great were the grief of Achaia."

Speaking he led the way; and his godlike friend follow'd after.
Soon did they find the chief, Zeus-loved;—and the Trojans around him
Swarm'd, as the thronging troops of the ravenous wolves on a mountain
Swarm on an antler'd stag, that is struck, by the shaft of the hunter,
Deep in its lordly side; and it flies far away, while its muscles
Still remain unrelax'd, and the blood flows warmly and freshly;
Until at last its strength yields apace to the pang of the arrow;
And on the mountain-side rush the wolves on the quarry, to tear him,
Under the forest-gloom.—When at once 'mid the tumult, a lion
Bursts—and the frighten'd wolves flee, leaving him sole in his banquet:
So upon mighty Odysseus, renown'd as he was as a warrior,
Swarm'd, in strength and in number, the soldiers of Troy:—and the hero
Still, with his weapon in hand, was averting the stroke of destruction:
When by his side at once, his broad shield rear'd as a buttress,
Ajax stood:—and the foes went scattering, this way, and that way:
While, with a friendly hand, Menelàus supported Odysseus
Out of the press of fight—till he met with his car and attendant.

Ajax charged with a bound upon Troy—striking over Doryclus,
Priam's bastard son:—then Pandŏcus sank with a death-wound.
Pyrăsus went down next, and Lysander and gallant Pylartes.
E'en as a swollen stream, breaking fierce through the clefts of a mountain,
Down to the level plain, high swollen to flood by the rain-fall,
Bearing uprooted oaks, and forests of pines, in its wild-rush,
Until the sea at the last holds the spoil of the furious torrent;
Such was the wrack, that day, on the field, as the prowess of Ajax
Overthrew horseman and horse in the fight.—Nor was Hector observant
Of what was there perform'd—he was far on the left of the battle,
Hard by Scamander's banks.—All around him, the slaughter was thickest;
There were fallen crests, and thence rose the mightiest uproar:
There was Nestor found, and Idomeneus, valorous monarch;
Hector was fighting there—and great were the hero's achievements;—
Ever with spear and steeds effacing the lines of the phalanx.
Yet not a step of ground would have yielded the sons of Achaia,

Had not the prince Alesander, the spouse of the fair-tress'd Helen,
Driven away from the battle Machàon, shepherd-of-people;
Planting in his right shoulder the triple barb of an arrow.
And, as they saw the wound, were affrighted the host of Achaia,
Lest, in the wavering combat, the chief should be slain: unto Nestor,
Godlike sage, thus spake the redoubtable king of the Cretans.

"Nestor! Neleus' son! thou glory of all the Achaians!
Up with thee!—mount on thy car!—and, close by thy side, let Machàon
Stand; and direct thy steeds with quickest pace to the galleys.
Many, of common mark, were equivalent small, for a surgeon
Skilful, like him, to heal by excision, and lenient unguents."

Thus did the Cretan speak, and Gerenian Nestor obey'd him;
Straightway he mounted his car; and, close by his side, did Machàon
Stand, the renowned son of a father famous for healing.
Nestor the steeds lash'd on; and they eagerly bounded before him
Unto the hollow galleys; impatient were they to arrive there.

Meanwhile, Cebriones, marking the rout and the flight of the Trojans,
Standing by Hector's side, thus spake to his chief; and address'd him.

"Hector! the Danaan troops, we are combating here; on the outskirts
Of the resounding war:—but in all other parts of the combat,
Troy's hosts, footmen and horses, are driven in mingled confusion,
Routed by great Telamonian Ajax—well I discern him,
Know him, above the press, by the broad shield gleaming before him.
Then let us thither direct our chargers and car; where the tumult
Thickens, and horse and foot rush in deadliest struggle together,
Mad for each other's lives, and the roar of the battle is deepest."

Thus did the warrior speak, and he lash'd the bright chargers before him
With the resounding scourge; and they, as the lash fell upon them,
Dash'd, with the bounding car, through the armies of Troy and Achaia:

Trampling over the dead, and the glittering shields: and the axle,
All underneath the car, and the rein-hooks in front, were bespatter'd
Thickly with drops of blood, from the hoofs of the terrible chargers,
And from the whirling wheels:—thus Hector drove to the combat,
Eager to break through the ranks, and to enter the press; and he troubled,
Sorely, the Danaan ranks,—though his spear had been slack for an instant,
Now 'mid the field at large did he scatter the ranks, and attack'd them;
Wielding his spear, now his sword; now ponderous masses of rough stone.
Yet he avoided the arm of the great Telamonian Ajax.

But, from his throne on high, Father Zeus, to the bosom of Ajax,
Sent an unwonted dread;—he his buckler shoulder'd behind him,
And, as a savage beast, made his way through the press:—though retreating,
Turning, and glaring behind him; as step after step he receded.
As when the savage dogs, and the wakeful bands of the herdsmen,
Watching the long night through, drive a terrible tawny-skinn'd lion
Off from the guarded fold, where the oxen are herded, nor yield him
One of the herd as a prey:—and the beast, expectant and famish'd,
Prowls near his hoped-for meal, not daring to spring,—for the jav'lins
Gleam in unnumber'd hands all ready for strife, and the torches
Lighten the gloom of night, and though famish'd he fears to molest them,
Till with returning dawn he reluctantly turns and retires:
Not less grieved at heart, from the ranks of the Trojans, did Ajax
Make his enforced retreat;—for he fear'd for the fleet of Achaia.
Just as a stubborn ass, amid corn, encounters the prowess
Of some troop of boys, whose sticks are broken upon him;
Yet does he stand and browse on the ears of the corn, while the urchins
Urge him with frequent blows, and their vigor is all unavailing;
Nor does he beat a retreat ere his hunger is fill'd to the fullest;
So, on the Argive chieftain, the great Telamonian Ajax,
Troy's proud sons, and the bands who had marched from a distance to aid her,
Press'd with persistent force; their spears bristled thick in his buckler.
Aye and anon, did the hero,—collecting his strength for the effort,—
Turn on his foes, and charge them:—and then would the ranks of the Trojans

Wheel them about and fly :—then slowly, again he retreated.
Yet from the whole of their army he guarded the way to the galleys;
All by himself sustaining the fight, between Troy and Achaia,
Standing alone :—and the spears from the sinewy arms of the foemen
Thick and fast, flew around ;—some fix'd, in their flight, in his buckler:
Some, falling short of the mark, unflesh'd, disappointed of carnage,
Quiver'd in earth deep-rooted, with points yet guiltless of slaughter.

But his distress was perceived ;—for Eurypylus, son of Evæmon,
Saw him in evil plight, hard press'd by the flight of the jav'lins ;
Rush'd out and stood by his side, and darting his spear at the Trojans,
Struck Apisàon, the issue of Phauses, shepherd-of-people,
Under the ribs thro' the liver :—he sank to the earth in the death-faint.
On to this fallen foe did Eurypylus rush, to despoil him ;
But, as he tore at the spoils, he was mark'd by the prince Alesander,
Fair in form as a God ; who his strong bow bent on the victor,
Even Evæmon's son, neither fail'd of his aim ; for the arrow
Wounded his better thigh ; and the shaft broke away from the iron.
Shunning impending fate, back again to his martial attendants
Totter'd the wounded chief—yet he shouted aloud in retreating.

" Friends ! who the Argive hosts lead in battle and guide in the council !
Turn again ; stand to your arms ; and preserve from the fate that awaits him
Ajax, half overwhelm'd by the weapons.——The throat of the battle
Threatens to swallow him up !—Once again, turn round, and defend him !
Serry your ranks by the side of the great Telamonian Ajax !"

Thus spake the wounded chief :—and the Argives fighting around him
Gather'd, and closed their ranks—with bucklers slanted together,
Spears all levell'd in line :—till Ajax, slowly retreating,
Came up in front of the ranks ;—and then turn'd combating with them.
Then, as a roaring flame, once again rose the fury of conflict.

Cover'd the while with foam, from the battle, the Nelian war-steeds,

Nestor carried away, with Machàon, shepherd-of-people:
And he was seen and mark'd by the swift-footed leader Achilleus;
For he was standing aloft on the poop of his deep-waisted galley,
Marking the laboring battle—the rout and the flight of Achaia.
And when he look'd on Machàon, he speedily spake to Patroclus,
Calling aloud from the ship—and his friend from the tent, as he heard him,
Came, like the God of war:—that step was the first step to evil[c].
First of the couple to speak was Menœtius' valorous offspring.

"Why do you call to me thus?—and for what have you need of my presence?"

Then, in reply to his friend, spake the swift-footed leader Achilles.

"Dear to my inmost soul, thou godlike son of Menœtius!
This very day, I suspect, to my knees, will the sons of Achaia
Throng in prayer:—for a need unendurable presses upon them.
But unto Nestor hurry, and ask him to tell thee, Patroclus!
Who is the wounded chief whom he carried, but now, from the battle.
Seen, as he was, from behind, his form was the form of Machàon;
Even Asclepias' son; full view of his face I obtain'd not,
As, in their eager hurry, the steeds dash'd rapidly by me."

Thus did the hero speak—and Patroclus heard, and obeying,
Went, at his utmost speed, to the ships and the tents of Achaia.
When the two chieftains[d] arrived at the tent of the offspring of Neleus,
Down from the car they stepp'd to the earth, lying fertile around them;
And from the yoke of the sage, did Eurymedon, trusty attendant,
Loosen the panting steeds:—and the chiefs stood, drying their garments—
Damp from the sweat of fight—in the cool sea-breeze, and then enter'd
Into the high-pitch'd tent: and there sat down on the couches.
And, to assuage their thirst, did the bright-hair'd slave Hecamède,
Temper a draught—fair captive of Tenedos, won by Achilleus,
Daughter of noble Arsinous, and by the sons of Achaia

[c] As leading to his own death. [d] Nestor and Machàon.

Given to Nestor's hand—the reward of his excellent counsels.
First, ere she mingled the draught, did she spread a fair table before them,
Polish'd and bright in face, with dark steel feet; and upon it
Order'd a brazen salver—with onions sliced for a relish;
And the pale liquid honey, and crush'd wheat—holy refreshment.
Then set an ample goblet, of excellent frame, which the elder
Brought from his distant home, all studded with gold, and the handles
Four in number around, had two doves feeding, uniting
Into a golden link—two doves were the foot of the goblet.
Such was the form of the bowl,—when full 'twas an effort to lift it;
Great, for a man in years; yet Nestor could easily raise it.
And, in this ample bowl, did the nymph, fair form'd as a Goddess,
Pour of the Pramnean wine; and rasp on the top, as a relish,
Cheese, of the milk of goats;—then white meal sprinkled upon it.
And, when the draught was mix'd, gave the bowl, and invited to drink it.
Long did they quaff at the bowl; and the deep thirst slaked that was in them:
And, when sufficed, they sat holding converse one with the other.

So, as they sat and talk'd in the doorway, like an Immortal,
Sudden Patroclus stood: and the elder, up in an instant,
Rose from his shining seat, and his hand seized, wishing to seat him.
But he refused to be seated; and spake to the sage, and address'd him.

"I have no time to repose, good father! In vain you persuade me.
I am but here to demand for a great friend, quick in his anger,
Who is the wounded chief thou'st carried from fight.—But I know him,
Ere thy reply can be made—for I look on the noble Machàon.
Now, with this news to relate, I must hie back again to Achilleus.
Well dost thou know, of thyself, O my father! how stern and unyielding
Often my friend is found;—how he blames where no blame is deserving."

Spake, in reply to the chief, the Gerenian horseman, Nestor.

"How is it now that Achilles is moved for the sons of Achaia,

Stricken by hostile shafts? He, alas! knows nought of the evil,
Borne by the grieving host. For the best, and the bravest, among us,
Lie in the hollow galleys: by spear-strokes wounded, or arrows.
Stricken by arrow-shaft, is Tydeus' son, Diomèdes:
Pierced by the strokes of spears, are Odysseus and Agamemnon;
Stricken by shaft in the thigh, is Eurypylus, son of Evæmon.
Him, whom thine eyes are beholding, I brought but now from the battle,
Pierced by a hostile shaft. And yet does the mighty Achilleus
Turn from the Danaan host, and waste not his pity upon them.
Is he awaiting the day when our ships, on the shore of the ocean,
Blaze with the hostile fires, despite the defence of the Argives,
And we are heap'd ourselves in promiscuous slaughter?—My vigor
Is not what once it was, when these limbs were supple and youthful.
Would! that I now were young, that my strength were as great as it once was,
When there was deadly feud between us and the people of Elis;
Feud for their plunder'd herds, and Itymoneus perish'd before me;
Even Hypeirochus' son; for he dwelt within Elis, and ventured,
As I was driving the herds, to attempt to redeem them, and perish'd,
Right in front of the battle, my spear transfix'd him and slew him;
There did he fall, and his rustics were scatter'd in terror around him.
Ample and rich was the spoil that we gather'd that day in the foray:
Fifty of beeves, and as many of sheep were the herds, and as many
More of the bristly swine, and as many of goats did we seize on.
And, of the bright bay steeds, one hundred and fifty in number;
All of them breeding mares, and foals had many beside them.
With such a splendid spoil, we by night, safe returning to Pylos,
Lodged in the city the whole.—Right glad was the bosom of Neleus,
That such a youth as myself had achieved such a spoil in the battle.
And, with the morning light, did the heralds make proclamation,
Bidding each man stand forth who had aught to him owing from Elis.
Then did the chieftains of Pylos collect, and they parted the plunder
Fairly among our people—for many were those who had suffer'd
Wrong from the Elean bands, in the days of misfortune to Pylos.
For at a recent date, had the arm of the mighty Heràcles

Captured and sack'd our town, and had slaughter'd our best and our bravest:
Twelve were my father's sons—brave princes they were—but among them
I, and I only, remain'd—of the rest all died in the onslaught:
Therefore, presuming on this, the Epeians, gleaming in armor,
Held us in low estimation, and aye framed mischief against us.
So, from the booty, my father a drove of oxen selected,
Also a flock of sheep, three hundred in number; with shepherds.
He had a heavy demand on his own account, upon Elis:
For he had sent to the games four steeds, well used to be victors;
Coursers of fame, with their cars—and they went to contend for the tripod,
Even the prize:—and the steeds did the king of men, Augeias,
Seize:—and the groom, back again, sent defrauded and stripp'd of the coursers.
Anger'd at such foul wrong, both of word and of deed, did my father
Seize now a full return. And he gave up the rest to the people,
Leaving to them to divide it, that none might impugn his decision.
So we arranged it all, and then thro' the whole of the city
Paid to the Gods our vows!—On the third day, circling round us,
Came on a swarming host—men at arms, and the strong-footed war-steeds,
All in compact array.—Bright-arm'd did Molione's offspring
Glitter among their host; mere youths and unwitting of warfare.
There is a certain town, Thryoessa;—a prominent landmark,
Hard by Alphæus' bank, far away on the margin of Pylos.
Camping around that town they besieged, and hoped to destroy it.
But, when their hosts were spread far abroad on the plain, did Athène
Pass in the dead of night from Olympus, a herald of warfare,
Bidding us arm for fight:—and she found all the people were ready:
All were alert for the war.—For myself, I was chidden by Neleus,
He interdicted arms; and my steeds he had taken and hid them:
For I was uninured—so he said—to the perils of warfare.
But, undeterr'd by this, I was found 'mid the cars and the war-steeds;
All upon foot as I was;—by the guidance of Pallas Athène.
There is a mountain-stream, Minyëus, which rolls into ocean

Hard by Arènè's wall:—there we halted and waited for morning;
We of the Pylian horse:—and in streams came thronging, the footmen.
So, in compacted force, all embattled and arm'd for the combat,
E'en at the hour of noon, did Alphæus see us beside him.
There did we halt, and pay due rites unto Zeus, to the highest;
Slaughter'd a bull to Alphæus, a bull to the mighty Poseidon;
And to the blue-eyed maid, to Athène,—a beautiful heifer.
Then did we take our meal, all the host being marshall'd in order;
And, when the meal was ended, reposed by the bank of the river;
Each in his shining arms.—Meanwhile did the armies of Elis
Compass the city around; all eager to take and destroy it;
But they had first to be taught a great lesson in matters of Àres.
For, as the level sun lit the earth with his beams, we were on them:
And we commenced that fight;—praying succor of Zeus and Athène.
And when the Pylian troops and Epeians mingled in combat,
First of the host did I slaughter a chieftain and seize on his war-steeds,—
Molion famed with the spear—he had wedded the eldest and fairest
Daughter of King Augeias, the golden-hair'd Agamède,
Skill'd in each healing herb, whatsoever Earth yields from her bosom.
Him, as he enter'd the fight, did I strike with the point of my jav'lin:
Headlong he roll'd in dust; while I, having master'd his chariot,
Stood in the van with my comrade.—The vaunting sons of Epeia
Scatter'd in wild dismay, when they saw their leader was vanquish'd,
He who had led their horse, and was counted the bravest among them.
I, on our side, o'er the field of the fight swept on as a whirlwind:
Capturing fifty cars, each car had two heroes beside it,
Gnashing the bloody dust, laid in death by my terrible weapon.
Actor's reputed sons would have that day died with their comrades,
Had not their real sire, the wide-ruling Ennosigaios,
Borne them away from fight, rolling clouds and vapor around them.
So, to the Pylian troops did Zeus give a notable conquest.
And, o'er the distant plain, we the foes charged, flying before us;
Slaying the scatter'd troops, and taking their arms for a trophy.
Until at last we came to Buprasium, famed for its wheat-fields;

And the Olènian rock, and Alesia's wall; where Colòne
Gives to the land its name :—and we there stopp'd, stay'd by Athène.
There was the last foe slain by myself; and the sons of Achaia,
Back from Buprasium, turn'd their steeds to the region of Pylos.
Then among Gods none as Zeus, among men none was honor'd as Nestor.
Such was I once myself :—such my feats in the field :—but Achilleus
Keeps all his valor close—as a thing to himself :—but believe me
He will be moved unto tears, if the host should utterly perish.
You may, yourself, good friend! recollect what Menœtius told you,
E'en on the day when he sent you from home to the King Agamemnon;
For, in his palace-walls, myself and the godlike Odysseus,
Heard what the elder spake, and admonish'd and strictly commanded.
'Twas at the time when we came unto Peleus' populous palace;
Rousing the tribes to the war through the length and the breadth of Achaia.
Then, in his palace-walls, did we find thy great father, Menœtius.
Thou thyself wert there, and Achilles: and then did the elder,
Even Peleus' self, on the altar of Zeus, of the Storm-God,
Burn of the fatted thighs, in the midst of the court; and libations
Pour from a golden bowl on the sacrifice flaming before us.
While ye were busied both with the victim, we in attendance
Stood in the porch of the court :—and with wonder espied us Achilleus;
Seizing us both by the hands, he constrain'd us to sit to the banquet;
Proffering goodly fare; as is fit to be offer'd to strangers.
When we had quench'd our thirst, and had satisfied fully our hunger,
Then I began to speak, and persuaded you both to come with us.
Well were you both inclined, but your fathers had much to admonish.
Peleus, hoary king, gave this charge to his son, to Achilleus;
'Ever to strive to be first, and in valor excel his companions.'
Thee, on the other hand, did Menœtius, offspring of Actor,
Charge thus! 'Remember, my son, that thou art no peer of Achilleus,
Though thou art elder born :—and in strength he can wholly surpass thee.
Let it be, therefore, thy part to give prudent advice, and suggest it;
Hinting at that which is good;—and be sure he'll be prompt to adopt it.
Such were the old man's warnings—forgotten of late :—yet recall them,

Speak to thy friend e'en now; and perchance you may move and persuade him.
Who can be sure, if the God will not aid thee, and speaking with thy voice,
Moving his lofty soul:—right dear is the voice of a comrade.
But if his mind is deterr'd by the fear of some gloomy prediction,
If there be aught from Zeus which his Goddess-mother has told him,
Then let him send thyself, and with thee let the Myrmidon armies
Follow thy steps to the war:—light again may dawn on the Argives.
And let him give thee besides his own bright arms for the battle:
So that the sons of Troy may mistake thee for him; and relinquish
War, and the harass'd ranks of the valiant sons of Achaia
May have a breathing space; and a respite, short, from the battle.
Fresh upon wearied men, your war-cry alone would subdue them;
Drive the astounded foe to the town, from the tents and the galleys."

Thus did the Elder speak, and the hero was moved as he heard him.
Hastily started he forth to return to the ships of Achilleus:
But when, hurrying on, he arrived at the barks of Odysseus,
E'en at the public mart, and the place where feuds are adjusted,
And where the altars stand for the service of all the Immortals,
There, face to face in his path, came Eurypylus, son of Evæmon,
Came, and in evil plight, with his thigh sore pierced by an arrow;
Reeling away from fight:—great sweat-drops roll'd from his forehead,
And from his shoulders broad; and the black blood, oozing profusely,
Trickled down from the wound:—but his heart beat firm and collected.
Much at the sight of the chief, did Menœtius' valorous offspring
Pity his evil case, and in sympathy thus he address'd him.

"Oh! for the Danaan chiefs, famed in battle, and mighty in council!—
Is it your hapless fate, far away from your friends and your country,
Here, on the soil of the Troad, to fatten the dogs with your corpses?
Yet do thou tell me but this, O Eurypylus! tell me, O hero!—
Hector's fierce assault—is he yet by the sons of Achaia
Held at bay? or, alas! do they yield to his terrible weapon?"

Then, with a heavy groan, did Eurypylus speak and address them.

"It is all past, O Patroclus! this day is the might of Achaia
Spent; and her wearied sons will perish to-day at the galleys.
All of our mightiest chiefs, whosoever were stoutest among us,
Lie in the hollow ships, sore wounded by spear or by arrow,
Wielded by Trojan hands: and the might of the foe is ascendant
But do thou help me and save me; and lead me away to my galley!
Cut from my thigh this shaft:—and the gore, that is clotted around it,
Wash thou with lukewarm water;—and healing drugs lay upon it;
Drugs of a virtue rare:—thou'st learnt them, men say, from Achilleus; 830
Chiron's pupil he, the most just of the race of the Centaurs.
For, of our leeches twain, Podalirius sage, and Machàon,
One—or I much mistake—in the tents lies wounded, and asks for,
Now, for himself, that aid which he often has yielded to others;
One, on the open plain, is in sharp strife set with the Trojans."

Thus, in reply to his friend, spake Menœtius' valorous offspring.

"Where will it all find a finish?—Eurypylus! what can we do now?
I am, this instant, away to Achilleus' tent; to repeat there,
All that Nestor has urged, sage guide of the sons of Achaia:
Yet, in this evil plight, 'tis impossible thus to desert thee." 840

Thus did the warrior speak—and sustain his friend on his bosom,
Aided him into his tent:—and there, on a mattress of ox-hide,
Which his attendants spread, constrain'd him to lie:—and the shaft-head
Cut, with his dagger-knife, deep out from the thigh;—and with water
Wash'd off the clotted gore: and then on the wound put a styptic;
Bruising the root in his hands.—Lo! the sharp pains yielded before it,
Closed up the wound at once,—and the hæmorrhage ceased in an instant.

BOOK THE TWELFTH.

Treats of the fight at the walls:—how the works first yielded to Hector.

THUS, in the shade of the tent, did Menœtius' valorous offspring
Wait on his wounded friend:—while, in doubtful and arduous battle,
Mingled the Argive hosts, and the armies of Troy.—The entrenchment,
Form'd with a ditch below, and a rampart above, which Achaia
Rear'd, as a fence to the fleet, with a broad trench gaping before it,
Might not restrain her foes:—no victims were offer'd to heaven,
So that the hollow ships and the manifold booty within them
Might be in peace and safety.—The work had never the blessing
Of the immortal Gods:—therefore, short was its term of endurance.
While yet Hector was living, and hot was the wrath of Achilleus,
And while the city of Priam the King was unwasted by foemen,
Even so long stood firmly the wall of the sons of Achaia.
But of the sons of Troy, when the best and the bravest had fallen,
And of the Argive hosts some had perish'd, and some were surviving;
And, in the tenth long year, had the city of Priam been wasted;
And when the Argive chiefs had departed again to their loved homes,
Then were the minds of the Gods—of Poseidon, and erst of Apollo,
Bent to abate that wall:—and they turn'd all the rivers upon it;
All of the turbulent waters from Ida rolling to ocean.
Rhodius, Rhesus too, and Eptàporus, foamy Carèsus,
Mighty Scamander's stream, and Granìcus too, and Æsèpus;
Simois too, with Scamander:—on whose banks bucklers and helmets,
Lay,—and of chiefs superhuman the corpses were piled in profusion.
All these torrents, at once, on the rampart, did Phœbus Apollo

Turn for nine long days;—and, more speedily still to destroy it,
Zeus, from the sky, to the earth pour'd down a continuous rain-fall.
Ennosigaios himself, in his right hand grasping his trident,
Led the attack; with his wild waves rending the mighty foundations,
Strengthened with stakes and stones—weary work of the sons of Achaia:—
Leaving a smooth expanse by the Hellespont's swift-flowing current:
Drifting the sand deep over the site of the works, and concealing
All the remains of the wall:—and the rivers again he reverted
Unto their wonted beds—where each was accustom'd to wander.

Such was the future work of Poseidon and mighty Apollo;
Such were their deeds for the future:—at present, the battle was burning
Fierce at the solid wall:—on the beams that protected the bulwarks,
Rattled the dint of spears:—while the Argives, stricken and humbled,
Cow'd by the scourge of Zeus, were herding in crowds by the galleys;
Waiting, in fear and in dread, for the terrible onset of Hector.
He, as of wont, through the field swept along like the blast of a tempest.
As when a great wild-boar, or a lion, turns in his fury,
Round on the baying dogs, and the venturous bands of the hunters,
Who, with their serried ranks, like a living rampart, against him,
Wait in their dense array; and thickly the flights of the jav'lins
Fly from their powerful arms;—yet his heart is unmoved and dismay'd not;
Nought does he know of fear;—tho' his courage will prove his destruction:
Ever anon he turns and he charges the ranks that molest him;
And, as he comes straight on, the ranks break asunder before him;
So, through the crowded field, swept Hector; exciting his soldiers
On to the storm of the works; but, though eager, the fleet-footed war-steeds
Dared not the pass attempt; but they stood there neighing with ardor,
Right on the trench's edge;—and afraid of the chasm before them
Wide and deep;—too wide to be leap'd—and the passage across it
Difficult;—having a mound, high-heap'd, and almost over-hanging,
Bank'd up on either side of the trench, and the space at the bottom

Bristled with sharpen'd stakes;—great work of the sons of Achaia—
Strongly and closely set; interdicting assault of the foemen.
'Twas not an easy task for a steed to make way with a war-car,
Thro' such a pass; but the foot were eager at heart to attempt it.
Close unto Hector's side did Polydamas stand, and address him.

"Hector! and all ye chiefs, both of Troy and the aids of the Trojan!
It were a senseless risk to encounter the trench with our war-steeds.
Difficult is it to pass; for the sharp stakes planted within it
Stand in the way; and behind is the wall of the sons of Achaia.
There is no room to deploy, no place there to marshal the battle,
If we retain our cars; it is narrow and threatens destruction.
If it be so, that the God, great Zeus, he who rolleth the thunder,
Frowns on the foe, and his aid altogether vouchsafes to the Trojans,
Then—and I would it were so—this day may the sons of Achaia,
Far from their Argive homes, lose life and their honor together:
But, on the other hand, if they turn and rally against us,
Beating us off from the fleet, and we plunge in the trench in retreating,
Then, not a man of the host, I suspect, would survive us, to carry
Back to the city the news of our rout by the sons of Achaia.
Let then the whole of the host do at once as I now am advising!
Here, on the edge of the trench, let the horses be left with attendants;
While, in compact array, ourselves, armed, gleaming in armor,
Follow where Hector leads;—and methinks that the sons of Achaia
Will not sustain the assault, for fate presses heavily on them."

Such the advice of Polydamas:—Hector approved when he heard it.
Down from the car at once did he leap to the earth in his bright arms:
Nor did the other chiefs of the Trojans rest in their war-cars,
But, one and all, came down, when they saw that Hector descended.
Each, as he came to the earth, gave his steeds to a trusty attendant;
Bidding him keep by the trench, and remain by it marshall'd in order.
Then they divided the host, and they serried the ranks for the onset:
Parted in five strong bands: each band with leaders before it.

Hector in front of the first, and Polydamas stood, as the leaders;
Throng'd under them, to the war, of the army the best and the bravest,
Eager to master the wall, and to carry the war to the galleys:
Third in command with them was Cebriones brave—for a warrior
Not so renown'd took charge of the car and the chargers of Hector.
Paris commanded the next, with Alcathous, and with Agènor.
Helenus headed the third, with Deiphobus like an Immortal,
Priam's redoubted issue; and Asius help'd to command them;
Asius, Hyrtacus' offspring, who came with his steeds from Arisba,
Borne by his bright bay steeds from the banks of thy river, Sellèis!
And of the fourth strong band, was Æneas chosen the leader;
Gallant Anchises' son; and with him were the sons of Antènor,
Acamas brave, and Archilochus—train'd up from youth to the combat.
Fifthly, the valorous aids of the Trojan were led by Sarpedon;
Glaucus was under him, and the warrior Asteropæus:
They, amid all of the host, after him were esteem'd as the bravest;
Bravest beyond all doubt; and as such did he love and esteem them.
So, when the hosts were parted, they serried their bucklers, and bore down
Full on the Argive ranks, with a confident ardor; predicting
That they would never stand, but would die by the sides of the galleys.

Thus, while the Trojan chiefs, and the far-sought aids of the Trojan,
Heeded the sound advice that Polydamas gave, and obey'd it;
One man, alone of the host, mighty warrior, leader of nations,
Asius, Hyrtacus' offspring, nor yielded his steeds nor attendant;
But—all fool as he was—in his car, to the storm of the galleys
Went: but malignant fate barr'd the way back again for returning.
Never again, in his pride, with his car and his chargers before him,
Shall he again return into Ilion swept by the breezes:
Fate, on its heavy wing, will soon sweep gloomily o'er him,
Fate, from the Cretan's spear—from Idomeneus' terrible weapon.
So, to the navy's left, did he drive; where the sons of Achaia
Throng'd from the open plain, with their battle-steeds and their war-cars,
Thither he drove his steeds, and his clattering car;—and he found not,

Portals closed in his path ; no long bars up to repel him ;
Wide were the unclosed gates, which the guards kept open, awaiting
Those of their friends from the fight who were seeking retreat at the galleys.
Thither, in pride of heart, did he drive on his steeds : his companions
Follow'd with eager shouts—for they said that the sons of Achaia
Would not sustain the assault, but would die by the sides of the dark ships.
Fools !——At the gate they found two warders, mighty in prowess,
Sprung from the dauntless race of the Lapithæ, famous in combat :
There was Peirithous' son, the redoubtable chief Polypœtes ;
There, too, the gallant Leonteus,—rival of homicide Àres.
Full in the front of the gates stood the brave pair ; guarding the portals :
Stood, as the oaks of the forest their tall heads rear on the mountains,
Braving the wind and rain, through the long succession of seasons ;
Grappling tight with their wide-spread roots to the rifts of the firm rock :
So, did the gallant pair, on their might and their valor reliant,
Fearlessly stand, in defiance of Asius' charge, and await him.
While, on the other side, their foes, with their bucklers above them,
Utter'd a long wild shout, and rush'd to the storm of the ramparts ;
Serried around their prince, and Iamenus too, and Orestes,
Adamas, Asius' son, and Thoon, and Œnomàus.
Up to this time were the warders exhorting the sons of Achaia,
—Standing within their gates,—to repel the attack from the galleys ;
But when they saw how the foe rush'd along to the wall to assail it,
And of the Danaan armies how wild was the clamor and panic ;
Sallying forth from the portal they there encounter'd the onset ;
Like to two great wild-boars, who, afar, in the glades of the mountain,
Hearing the coming noise of the dogs and the clamorous hunters,
Charge, in a course athwart, thro' the woods, overturning the thickets,
Cutting them up by the root :—and the sound from beneath, as the stems fall,
Comes, from their grinding tusks ;—till their fury is stay'd by a spear-cast.
Thus, beneath hostile blows, on the breasts of the venturous warders,
Sounded the glittering mail ; for they mingled sternly in battle ;
Trusting their own great might ; and the aid of their friends on the ramparts.
These from the well-built tow'rs, on the heads of the foemen beneath them,

Shower'd the massive stones; in defence of themselves, their encampment,
And of their swift-sailing galleys.—The stones fell thick, as the snow-flakes
Fall, when a wintry wind, rolling up dense vapors before it,
Covers the fertile earth with the thick white mantle: the missiles
Flew, in so heavy a storm, from the hands of the sons of Achaia,
And from the hands of the Trojans. The helms of the combatants sounded,
Loud, underneath the blows,—and the well-boss'd orbs of the bucklers.
Then, with a groan of anger, his hands down-driven on both thighs,
Asius, Hyrtacus' son, thus vented his rage and amazement.

"Zeus! Father Zeus! thou art but become a deceiver among us!
Not a whit more or less!—I supposed that the sons of Achaia
Would not sustain our might, and the shock of our terrible onset.
But, as the swarming bees, or the wild wasps, streak'd in the middle,
Building their teeming nest in the rocks by the side of a pathway,
Will not, assaulted, abandon their hollow home, but abide there,
Turning their stings on the foes, in a stout defence for their offspring;
So, from the gates, our foes,—though but two are before us,—consent not,
Wisely, to beat a retreat; but remain, to be slaughter'd or captured."

Thus did the warrior speak, but his clamor was lost upon great Zeus.
Hector, alone, was the chief unto whom he the glory predestined.
Others, at other gates, were engaged in as arduous battle.
Were I a God, it were vain for my tongue to attempt to describe it!
Over the whole of the rampart, the battle was raging like fierce flame:
And, as their need compell'd, the Achaians, groaning in anguish,
Sought to defend their ships,—and the Gods were troubled in spirit;
All to the Danaan host, who in war stood, aids and defenders.

Sternly the conflict raged, where the Lapithæ guarded the portals.
First did Peirithous' son, the redoubtable chief Polypœtes,
Damasus slay with his spear; he the cheek struck hard of the helmet;
Nor did it stand to the shock; for the temper'd brass of the cheek-plate

Parted beneath that blow—thro' brass and thro' bone went the spear-point,
Smashing the brains within, and quenching his ardor for battle.
Pylus he slaughter'd next :—then Ormenus sank with a death-wound.
Then, at Antimachus' offspring, Hippolochus, mighty Leonteus,
Aim'd with his spear, and pierced him ; the lance pass'd under his girdle.
Then, from his glittering sheath, he his bright blade drew, and a charge made
Right on the hostile press, and Antiphates met, and assailing,
Hand unto hand in the fray, struck him over in combat, and slew him.
Menon he slaughter'd next, then Iamenus died, and Orestes :
All, on the fertile earth, in a heap, lay gasping before him.

While from the slaughter'd foemen, the armor was stripp'd by the victors,
All Troy's bravest and best, by Polydamas marshall'd, and Hector,
Moved, in a mass, to the storm :—their minds excited within them,
Eager to master the rampart, and lay to the galleys the bright flame.
Yet, on the edge of the trench, did they halt and debate for an instant :
For, as to pass they prepared, came an omen of notable import ;
Full on the left of the army : an eagle, loftily soaring,
Bore in its crooked talons the folds of a terrible serpent,
Living, and wreathing yet, and with vigor for fight unabated :
For, with its coils curl'd back, on the breast of its captor, the serpent
Struck, at the base of the neck ;—and the eagle, smitten with anguish,
Cast to the earth its prey,—and it fell in the midst of the tumult—
And, on the wings of the wind, with a scream far floated the eagle.
Shudder'd the sons of Troy, at the sight of the snake, with its bright spots,
Lying amid their ranks :—such a sign from the Ægis-wielder.—
Unto the side of Hector, Polydamas moved, and address'd him.

" Hector ! Thy habit in council is ever to chide and rebuke me,
Though what I proffer be good.—It is ever a thing interdicted,
For any private man to oppose thy designs in the council,
Or in respect to the war :—it is his, but to pamper thy glory.
Yet will I now speak boldly, and say what I deem is the best course.

Let us not urge on the fight with the Danai up to the galleys!
For, if we do, the result I suspect will be this—as the omen
Came to the sons of Troy, all eager to storm the entrenchment,
Came on the left of the host, yon eagle loftily soaring,
Bearing in crookèd talons the folds of the terrible serpent,
Living, yet cast it away from its claws, ere it came to its eaglets;
Nor did it carry the prey to its nest, and its ravenous young ones;
Even like it, shall we, tho' the walls and the gates of the foemen
Yield to our fierce attack, and we vanquish the sons of Achaia,
Yet, by the way that we went shall we shamefully come from the combat;
Leaving behind full many a Trojan chief; by Achaians
Slaughter'd, in that stern strife which will rise in defence of the galleys.
Such the conclusion, at least, that a skilful seer would arrive at;
One who is versed in signs,—and is trusted as such by the people."

Then, with a low'ring look, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"All thou hast utter'd, but now, I, Polydamas! hear with disrelish.
Better advice is thine, if thy tongue could be moved to declare it.
Or if, in steadfast sooth, thou hast spoken the thing that thou thinkest,
Then is it plain, that the Gods have resumed that sense which they once gave.
Wouldest thou have me forget the high purpose of Zeus?—What he promised,
Even the thundering Zeus—and his nod vouchsafed, to affirm it?
And have me trust in birds—and the course of their wandering pinions?
Have me rely upon them?—Upon things I despise—I regard not
Whether they fly to the right, and the sunrise seek, and the morning;
Or if they sheer to the left, to the dusk of the eve, and the sunset!
We have a surer guide:—to obey the commands of the Highest:
Even of Zeus supreme; him, the ruler of men and Immortals.
This is the best of omens—to fight for the land of our fathers.
But why fearest *thou* the result of the war and the combat?
If all the rest of the host are predestined to die at the galleys,
E'en at the Argive fleet,—small fear thou'lt perish among us:—

Thou hast no heart for attack, and no courage to wait an assailant[a];
Yet, if thou fly from the field, or attempt, by ignoble persuasion,
Others to frighten away from the strife thyself art afraid of,
Death is thine instant lot—stricken through by the point of my jav'lin."

Thus did the warrior speak; and he led the assault: and his soldiers
Follow'd with terrible shout:—and Zeus, great lord of the lightning,
Sent, from the ranges of Ida, the blast of a tempest; it drove on,
Whirling the dust on the galleys;—unnerving the sons of Achaia:
And to the hosts of Troy, and to Hector, giving the glory.
Trusting the signs from above, and the might of their hands and their prowess,
They, to Achaia's wall, laid siege, and attempted to force it:
Tearing the bastions down, and the battlements crowning the rampart,
And the supports of the wall;—even those which the sons of Achaia
Planted so deep in earth—the foundation and strength of the bulwarks.
These did they rend away—and they hoped that the wall of Achaia
Soon would be broken through:—but the Danai held to the struggle,
Manning the leaguer'd works, and the battlements lined with their bucklers;
Plying with stones and missiles the foemen striving beneath them.
And, along all of the works, moved ever the mighty Ajaces,
Ranging on every side, and arousing the might of Achaia:
Praising, where praise was due, but reproaching with bitter invective
Him—if they found any one—who was shrinking away from the contest.

"Friends! for each Argive here—be he mighty in fight, or but equal
Unto his friends, or weaker in prowess—(for all in the battle
Are not of equal mark)—there is work well suited for all men.
Well do ye know, it is so.—Then let not a soldier among you
Turn unto flight his back, in dismay at the threats of the foemen:
Press rather boldly in front; and incite one another to action:
So, by the grace of Zeus, the Olympian, lord of the lightning,

[a] The taunt appears to have been quite undeserved. Polydamas greatly distinguishes himself in the ensuing battle.

We may repulse our foes, and pursue them as far as their own town."

Shouting aloud, they incited the fight on the side of Achaia.
From both hostile ranks, thick, fast, as the flakes of the snow-storm
Fall on a wintry day—when the provident Zeus, in his wisdom,
Wills to release his snows, and resort to the arrows of heaven;
And—for the winds are tranquil—the snow falls steady and ceaseless,
Until it covers at once the high ridges and peaks of the mountains;
Covers the lotus-beds, and the deep fat tilth of the farmers;
E'en on the salt sea-coast does it lie; in the bays and the shallows;
Save where the wash of the waves cuts the coating away, and beyond them
All is alike conceal'd, as the snow falls steadily downwards:
So, and from either side, did the stones fly in pitiless showers;
Flew on the ranks of Troy, and from Troy on the sons of Achaia,
Falling alike—and on high o'er the wall rose the roar of the battle.

Nor had the sons of Troy, though Hector himself was among them,
Conquer'd the guarded gates and the bars protecting the entrance,
Had it not been that Zeus sent his own brave issue, Sarpedon[b],
Right on the Argive host:—as a lion flurries the oxen.
High up aloft did he carry his circular buckler before him;
Bright and fair was the orb, all of beaten brass, which the brass-smith
Wrought for the warrior's use, and he lined it with linings of bull's hide,
Fix'd to the buckler's rim with golden rivets around it.
Bearing it high in his front, and with two spears brandish'd before him,
Ready he stood for attack—as a lion, rear'd in the mountain,
Feeling the lack of meat, is incited by fury and hunger,
On to the fleecy flock, and to try the high wall of the sheepfold.
Haply he finds that the fold has the shepherds crowded around it;
Keeping, with arms and dogs, their night-long watch;—yet the lion
Will not, without an attempt, from the fold turn back to the forest;
But, with a sudden bound, he his prey strikes down:—or his death-wound

[b] Because, although Sarpedon did not himself effect an entrance, his attack, by drawing off the greater Ajax and Teucer to repel it, facilitated the attack made by Hector.

Meets, 'mid the foremost ranks; stricken thro' with the spears of the hunters.
So was the godlike leader Sarpedon urged, by his courage,
To the assault of the wall, and the storm of the battlements on it.
Glaucus, Hippolochus' offspring, the hero approach'd, and address'd him.

"Why, in our Lycian land, do we stand as the first and the foremost,
Graced with the highest places, and full-crown'd cups, at the banquet,
And with the largest mess—and are honor'd as Gods by the people?
Why does a wide domain spread afar—and for us—by the Xanthus,
Dark with empurpled vines, and bright with the gold of its harvests?
Does it not all demand that we mingle in fight with the foremost;
Leading our Lycian bands far ahead in the heat of the battle?
So that the common speech of the mail-clad soldiers around us,
Thus may describe their chiefs. 'Our kings are not barren of glory;
They who have sway in the land, and who feed on the fat of the sheep-folds,
Drinking the luscious wine, have sinew and nerves in abundance;
Strength for fight—and shine in the battle the foremost among us.'
For if, in sooth, good friend! supposing us clear from the combat,
We could rely on a life never-ending, and never afflicted
By old age and its ills—neither *I* would press on in the battle,
Nor would I urge it on *thee* thus to barter existence for glory.
But as it is—since fate presses on by a thousand approaches,
Comes in ten thousand forms, and we cannot escape or evade it—
Let us advance on the foe—let us either win glory, or yield it!"

Such were the words of the monarch:—and Glaucus heard, and obey'd him.
Right on the wall did the chiefs move with mighty numbers around them.
Nor was their course unmark'd by Peteus' son, by Menestheus;
He, with a shudder, saw that it threaten'd his band with destruction.
Over the wall did he search, 'mid Achaia's host, for a hero,
Who might assist his troops, and the fate drive off that approach'd them.
Soon did the chief perceive, not distant, the martial Ajaces,

Standing, fresh for the fight; and beside, just come from the galleys[c],
Teucer—they all were near,—but with voice it were vain to attempt them;
Such was the tumult around—up rising from earth to the heavens,—
Even the clash of shields, and of helmets crested with horsehair;
And of the batter'd portals—for all were besieged—and the foemen
Throng'd to the leaguer'd gates, and attempted to burst them by main force.
And unto Ajax straight did he send off the herald Thoötes.

"Hasten, with quickest speed, call Ajax here to assist us;
Better the two than one:—that, in sooth, were the safer arrangement;
Best for this time of need;—for fate stands imminent o'er us.
Here are the Lycian leaders advancing to storm; men, of old time,
Known for their skill in arms, and their prowess and strength in the combat.
But if, as here, there also the peril of battle is urgent,
Then, let us have but the aid of the great Telamonian Ajax;
Also, let Teucer come; to assist with his skill as a bowman."

Thus did the chieftain speak; and the herald off in an instant,
Went, at speed, by the wall of the Argives gleaming in armor:
Stood by th' Ajaces' side, and he urgently spake and address'd them.

"Leaders twain of the ranks of the Argives gleaming in armor!
Peteus' high-born son sends a pressing message, to call you
Instantly where he stands; to protect him from threaten'd destruction.
Better ye both should go:—that, in sooth, were the safer arrangement;
Best for this time of need;—for fate stands imminent o'er him.
There are the Lycian leaders advancing to storm; men, of old time,
Known for their skill in arms, and their prowess and strength in the combat.
But if, as there, here also the peril of battle is urgent,

[c] It will be remembered that on the previous day he had been struck down by Hector: so that probably his bruises had kept him in his tent, from which he was now called out by the noise of the battle on the wall.

Then, let him have but the aid of the great Telamonian Ajax;
Also, let Teucer go; to assist with his skill as a bowman."

Thus did he speak;—and assented the great Telamonian Ajax.
Unto Oïleus' son did he rapidly speak and address him.

"Ajax! abide thou here, both thou, and the brave Lycomèdes;
Stand, and encourage the troops, and their spirits arouse to the battle.
I must be off for a while, where an imminent danger assails us;
When it is fairly repell'd, I am with you again, in an instant."

Speaking, away did he stride—did the great Telamonian Ajax;
Teucer, his father's offspring, his own half-brother, attended;
Strong Pandìon carried for Teucer his bow and his arrows.
Soon did the three arrive at the post of the hero Menestheus,
Passing in rear of the wall[d]—and they came unto men who were hard press'd:
For to the wall itself, to the battlements, dark as a tempest,
Surged up the valorous ranks of the Lycian princes and leaders;
Then came the clash of encounter, and loud was the strife, and the tumult.
Foremost to slaughter a foe was the great Telamonian Ajax;
Epicles, friend of Sarpedon, magnanimous chief; for he struck him,
Hurling a rugged stone, which was lying inside of the rampart,
E'en on its topmost part by the battlements—massy and rugged;
Such as, with both his hands, in the vigor of manhood, a strong man
Scarcely could heave;—such men as are now to be found.—Yet he raised it,
Flung it, and shatter'd the helm of his crested foe; and the fragment
Smash'd both bones and brain;—and the Lycian, like to a diver,
Plunged from the leaguer'd wall;—and the fierce soul fled from the carcass.
Teucer, surmounting the wall, as the son of Hippolochus, Glaucus,
Rush'd to the storm of the rampart, the chief hit fair, with an arrow,
On his unguarded arm; and abated his zeal for the combat.
Hiding his hurt, from the wall he descends with a leap, lest an Argive,

[d] That is, along the inner foot of the wall: not going along the battlements.

Marking his wounded arm, should address him in accents of insult.
Grieved was Sarpedon's soul, for the loss of Glaucus disabled:
For he remark'd his retreat—yet himself ceased not from the contest.
Thestor's offspring, Alcmaon, his lance-point felt in his bosom;
And, as the spear was retracted, he follow'd, and fell from the rampart,
Headlong:—his brazen armor in thunder clashing upon him.
Then, with his stalwart hands, on the battlement's summit, Sarpedon
Seized,—and it yielded in mass, and he dragg'd it away; and the rampart
Lay with an open breach, and a broad way clear'd for the stormers.
Teucer and Ajax rush'd in defence of the gap;—with an arrow
Teucer the bright belt struck, that supported the shield of the monarch,
Shading his stalwart breast—but his Father averted the death-stroke:
Nor would he suffer his son thus to fall by the poops of the galleys.
Ajax charged with a bound at the shield of the king,—but the spear-point
Pierced not the buckler through—but it stagger'd the prince in his onset.
Backward, away from the wall, he retreated a space—yet he would not
Give the adventure up—for his soul was intent upon glory.
Turning him round he exhorted the Lycian soldiers about him.

"Lycians! why do ye thus shrink back from the stress of the combat?
Strong tho' I am in the fight, 'tis a task that I cannot accomplish,—
I, with my single arm,—to uncover a way to the galleys.
Let us unite our strength,—and with forces united we fail not."

Thus did he speak—his men——for they felt that he justly reproach'd them——
Bore, in support of the king, with a sterner might on the foemen.
While, on the other side, did the Argives serry their phalanx,
Closer within their wall:—for a crisis plainly approach'd them.
Nor could the Lycian troops, all brave as they were, in the contest,
Break thro' the Danaan wall, and a way lay bare to the galleys;
Nor, at the point of the spear, could the Danai, off from the ramparts,
Bear their Lycian foes, back again from their point of advantage.
As on a field held in common, two neighbors, striving for limits,—

Measuring-rods in hand—and demanding an equal partition,
For the minutest space are exacting, and eager to wrangle ;—
So did the line of the rampart the two hosts part—who, above it,
Seeking each other's breasts, with their weapons, in murderous conflict,
Hack'd into pieces the circular shields, and the quivering bucklers.
Many were laid in the dust—stabb'd, close at hand, by the lances ;
Some as they turn'd, and exposed their unarm'd backs to the foemen,
Unprotected ; and more pierced right through the fence of the buckler :
While from the leaguer'd wall and the battlements, trickled on all sides
Blood—shed by either host—men of Troy and the sons of Achaia.
Nor could the raging foe thus affrighten the sons of Achaia.
All held on to the strife ; as some honest laborious woman,
Weighing the wool she has spun—the wool bringing bread to her children—
Holds up the scales and weights—and anxiously levels the balance :
So did in equal scales hang the fates of the war and the battle ;
Until the time arrived when Zeus gave the glory to Hector,
Priam's warlike son—for he first won the wall of Achaia :
Calling the sons of Troy to the storm with a terrible outcry.

"Trojans ! on to the fight !—to the storm of the wall of the Argives !
Breach it, and carry the flames, the devouring flames to the galleys."

Thus did he speak :—and they heard with their ears wide open around him ;
All in a mass they assaulted the base of the wall and the outworks,
Mounted, attempting to storm them ; with sharp spears levell'd before them.
Hector a great stone lifted which lay in the front of the portals,
Solid and large at the base, but the lessening top of the fragment
Ran to a point :—two men, of the strongest, barely could lift it,
Raising it up from earth, and upheaving the mass on a waggon ;
Men, such as men are now :—yet alone did he raise it and wield it—
For it was render'd light by the son of the Crafty[e] in council.

[e] Cronos.

And as a swain may carry the fleece of a ram, and support it
Easily, in one hand; and take small trouble about it;
Not less easily Hector the stone bore, fronting the panels,
Closing the solid gates, right firmly and strongly compacted,
Mighty in bulk and height; and two bars fitted together
Fasten'd the gates inside, with a bolt connected between them.
Near to the gates he advanced, and the great stone heaved at the centre
—Standing with feet wide apart, that the blow might have energy in it—
Both of the hinges yielded; the fragment came, with a great crash,
Right through the shatter'd gate;—and the portals groan'd, and the bolts sprung,
Starting away, and the panels were shiver'd on this and on that side
Under the blow of the stone:—in leap'd the redoubtable Hector;
Gloomy as night in a storm was the look of the chief:—and his armor
Gleam'd with a lurid splendor; two glittering weapons his hands held,
Brandish'd.—A God alone had sufficed to have met and repell'd him,
Thus as he leap'd thro' the gates—and the fire flash'd red from his eyeballs.
Turning around in the press he commanded the Trojans about him,
Bidding them mount on the wall;—and they readily heard and obey'd him.
Some by the line of the rampart their way made; some through the portals,
E'en through the gates themselves;—and then did the Danaan armies
Scatter in fear to the galleys:—and wild was the rout and the uproar.

BOOK THE THIRTEENTH.

Shows how, in fight by the ships, were the Danai help'd by Poseidon.

Zeus, by Achaia's fleet having planted the Trojans and Hector,
Left them to finish the task, and to toil in the arduous combat;
Toil in unceasing strife:—and averted his radiant eyeballs,
Far from the slaughter-field, to the Thracian land, and the region
Held by the Mysian race, close-fighters; and, justest of all men,
Living on milk of mares, the illustrious Hippemolgi.
Nor to the Troad again he reverted the glance of his eyeballs;
Deeming that none of the Gods would be minded to render assistance
Unto the arms of Troy, or to succor the hosts of Achaia.

Nor was an idle watch maintain'd by the God Enosicthon.
Wond'ring he sat, and gazed, from afar, on the war and the combat;
High on the topmost summit of Samos,[a] girded with woodland;
Far on the Thracian shore.—Full in sight were the ranges of Ida,
Priam's well-built town, and the ships of the sons of Achaia.
There, rising up from the sea, did he sit, and bewail his Achaians
Slaughter'd by Trojan hands:—and at Zeus he was fiercely indignant.
Sudden, he bent his course, all wrathfully down from the mountain,
Moving with long fierce strides. The high summits around, and their wood-belts,

[a] "To the south was Tenedos; and here, at my side, was Imbros, according to the map: but aloft, over Imbros—aloft, in a far-away Heaven—was Samo-thrace; the watch-tower of Neptune."—See Eothen, p. 65.

Shook to the feet of the God, to the tread of the mighty Poseidon.
Three long strides did he take, with the fourth reach'd the goal that he aim'd at,
Ægæ :—there in the depths of the bay was his beautiful dwelling,
Fashion'd of burnish'd gold, bright-gleaming, enduring for all times.
There did he enter in, and he harness'd the brass-footed chargers,
Swift as the winds in flight ; all gold fell the manes on their shoulders.
Then he apparell'd his limbs in his harness of gold ; and he handled
Next his golden scourge, well-fashion'd ; and mounted the chariot.
Then took his way on the waves.—Upheaving from ocean, on all sides,
Gamboll'd the whales by the side of the God, and acknowledged their great King :
And the rejoicing Sea spread a path for his car ; and the coursers
Bare him smoothly along :—not a wave rose to moisten his axle :—
Until the bounding steeds set their Lord at the fleet of Achaia.

There is a broad sea-cave, far down in the depths of the sea-belt ;
Midway 'twixt Tenedos, and the rock-piled summit of Imbros.
In it, away from the yoke, did the great Earth-shaker, Poseidon,
Loose the immortal steeds ; lay ambrosial fodder before them ;
Fodder divine ; and their feet fit with golden shackles about them,
Proof against force or fraud : that so they might surely be found there,
Waiting the King's return.—Then he went to the host of Achaia.

Fierce as devouring flame, and collected in might, as a whirlwind,
Troy's brave sons to the war, after Hector, eagerly onward,
Rush'd with shouts and yells ; all mad for the storm of the galleys ;
And for the slaughter there of the whole of the sons of Achaia.
But he who circles the world, the divine Earth-shaker, Poseidon,
Quicken'd the Argive ranks ; rising up from the depths of the ocean ;
Cloth'd in Calchas' form, with voice as the voice of the prophet.
First of the host he address'd the Ajaces, eager for combat.

"You may redeem, and you only, Ajaces ! the host of Achaia ;

Minding your wonted courage, and not being frozen with terror!
Elsewhere, I do not much dread the might of the foe;—though assailants
Master the guarded wall, and throng in a swarm on the rampart:
Stoutly the foe is repell'd by the well-mail'd sons of Achaia.
But, at the present point, I am much apprehensive of evil.
Here the attack is directed by Hector himself; and the madman
Rages as fierce as flame, and deems him descended from great Zeus.
Would that a God might plant in your bosoms a stern resolution,
Stoutly to stand yourselves, and to quicken the soldiers around you!
Then, come he on as he might, ye'd hurl the foe back from the galleys;
Though the Olympian God himself were to urge him against you."

Such were the words of the God, of the Earth-ruling Ennosigaios;
And with his sceptre he touch'd both the chiefs; and he fill'd them with vigor;
Making their limbs all light, their hands and feet all elastic.
While he himself, as a hawk, from a crag where the goat never browses,
Spreads its wings for flight, and, swooping below from its aery,
Floats over open plains far away in pursuit of the quarry;
So, from the Argive chiefs, flew the great Earth-shaker, Poseidon.
First was the God perceived by the swift-footed son of Oïleus:
He, to his great namesake, turn'd hastily round, and address'd him.

"Ajax! One of the Gods,—of the high-dwelling Lords of Olympus,—
Veil'd in human form, commands us to fight for the galleys.
Prophet and seer as he is, no Calchas this who address'd us:
I could distinguish the steps, and the form of a God in departing,
E'en as he turn'd his back:—for the Gods may be readily noted.
As for myself, I feel at my breast something rising within it,
Urging me on to the fight; with a new-born ardor for battle.
Hands and feet both alike are alive with unwonted excitement."

Spake, in reply to the chieftain, the great Telamonian Ajax.

"So do I—even myself—feel my hand, with more vigorous action,
Handle my spear; and my soul is alive; and my feet underneath me
Carry me lighter on;—and my heart is all hot to encounter
Hector, the son of the King, and to grapple with him in the death-strife."

Thus, as the Argive chiefs held converse one with the other,
Cheer'd by the vigor divine which the God had implanted within them;
He, the earth-shaking God, in the rear went, rousing Achaia;
Those, by the side of the galleys, who sought to recover their courage;
Feeling their limbs grow faint with the labor and toil of the combat:
Feeling their hearts sink low in their breasts, as they look'd on the Trojans
Winning the leaguer'd wall, and thronging in crowds on the rampart.
Fast, as they stood and gazed, did the hot tears roll from their eyelids;
Deeming escape cut off from the evil at hand:—but Poseidon
Easily rallied the host, and compacted and serried the phalanx.
Teucer, the first of all, then Leitus heard him address them;
Thoas, Andræmon's son, and Deipyrus next, and Penèleus:
Merion next and his comrade Antilochus, prompt for the onset.
These did the God address, with quick sharp words of incentive.

"Shame on you, Argive men, yet striplings in fight!—I had trusted
That, by your valorous deeds, all fear might be waived for the galleys.
But if ye thus, as now, lose courage and shrink from the combat,
Deem not the time is afar when the host shall be spoil'd by the Trojans.
Gods, what a wondrous sight these eyes this day have encounter'd!
Sight of dread; which I deem'd they never would live to have gazed on!
Trojans threaten the ships:—those Trojans who formerly herded,
Helpless as driven deer; which astray through the wilds of the woodlands
Fall as a prey to the dogs, or the teeth of the wolves, or the panthers:
Wandering weakly about; with no courage or heart to direct them.
So did the sons of Troy flee once from the sons of Achaia,
Dreading their prowess and might; nor daring to combat against them.
Now, far away from the ramparts, the war surges up to the galleys:
Half thro' our leader's fault, and half thro' the sloth of his people:

They who, in dudgeon at him, are unwilling to fight for the rescue
E'en of our swift-prow'd ships;—and are now like to perish beside them.
Grant that the case is thus,—that our chief is the cause of the evil,
Even the hero Atrides, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon;
Grant that the fault is his,—forasmuch as he injured Pelides;—
Yet it becomes not us all tamely to shrink from the combat,
Rather to heal up the wound;—for the brave may be quickly entreated.
Ye, above all in the army, the best and the bravest among it,
Should not forget your strength and your prowess in fight!—For a dastard
Shrinking away from war, not a word would I speak to reproach him:
Let him begone as he lists!—But with *you* I am deeply indignant.
Are ye forgetful, friends, that your sloth and inaction in combat
Will but increase our ills?—Each bosom should feel as you hear me,
Feel an indignant shame!—It is no petty strife that awaits us!—
Hector faces the fleet!—It is he sets the battle against us!—
He, mighty chief as he is, has shatter'd the bars and the portals."

Thus spake the great Earth-girder; arousing the hearts of Achaia!
Round the two mighty Ajaces collected the strength of the phalanx;
Firm, and compact for fight.—Not Arès' self would have blamed it,
Nor would the goddess Athenè.—For there were the best, and the bravest,
Waiting, in dense array, for the onset of Troy and of Hector.
Spear bristled hard upon spear; and buckler was serried on buckler:
Shield, lock'd shield; helm, helm; and man stood close to his fellow:
While, as the warriors moved, on their crests, with an uniform motion,
Nodded the horsehair plumes;—so thick were they banded together.
And, all in front of the host, in the strong firm hands of the holders,
Quiver'd the spears in line;—and they eagerly waited to use them.

Troy charged first, in a mass; and Hector, the first of the Trojans,
Headed the fiery charge.—As a rock o'er the crest of a mountain,
Torn from its rooted station by some tempestuous torrent,
Swell'd by unwonted rains, which have loosen'd the bed of the boulder,
Bounds high aloft down the side of the steep, and the forests, before it,

Yield ; and it whizzes along ; till it strikes with a crash, and imbedded
Deep in the level plain, there first finds its fury arrested ;
Such was Hector's charge ; still threatening, up to the Ocean,
E'en to the hollow ships and the tents of the sons of Achaia,
Slaughter and easy defeat ;—till he came all at once on the phalanx ;
And came there to a stand ;—for, in front, were the sons of Achaia ;
Who, with brandish'd falchions, and partisans wielded in both hands,
Beat him away from the ranks :—overmatch'd, he retreated a small space ;
But to his Trojan troops call'd loudly with terrible outcry.

"Trojans ! Lycians, too ! and ye Dardans ! famous in close-fight !
Wait awhile !—Short is the check I sustain from the sons of Achaia !
Form'd as they are for the fight, and embattled in arms as a fortress ;
Yet will they never sustain the assault of my spear, if the Highest,
Herè's thundering Lord, has commission'd my arm to the battle."

Thus did the Trojan speak ; and he roused all the soul in his hearers.
Forth from his comrades, Deiphobus, bent on a doughty achievement,
—Priam's valorous son—with his round shield brandished before him,
Moved, with cautious steps :—not quitting his shield for an instant.
Merion, on as he came, well marking the chief with his jav'lin,
Hurl'd at, striking his foe ; for the spear hit his circular buckler
Fashion'd of tough bull's hide ; nor pierced through the shield ;—for the spear-head
Broke short away from the shaft ;—and the Trojan, stricken with pale fear,
Bore off his shield far away from his breast, and was scared at a spear-stroke
Sent so nearly aright by his notable foe. But the hero[b]
Rush'd back again to the troop of his friends, and was fiercely indignant,
Both for a conquest miss'd, and the fracture and loss of his weapon.
So he prepared to depart to the tents and the ships of Achaia,
Seeking another spear, even one he had left there behind him.
And as he went, in his rear, rose the strife, and the roar of the combat.

[b] Meriones.

Teucer first, in the fray, son of Telamon, slaughter'd a foeman :
Imbrius, skill'd with the spear ; son of Mentor famous for war-steeds.
Until the war commenced he had dwelt in his home at Pedæus.
Wedding a base-born child of the King, the fair Medisicastè,
There did he dwell in peace, till the Danai came with their galleys :
Then unto Ilion's wall he return'd to give aid to the Trojans ;
Dwelling in Priam's house, and honor'd as one of his offspring.
Him, underneath his ear, did the great Telamonian Teucer
Strike ; then retracted the spear ; and he fell at the blow, as an ash-tree
Rear'd on a mountain-crest, on a ridge seen afar upon all sides,
Fell'd by the woodman's axe, lays its green boughs flat on the greensward ;
Such was the Trojan's fall ; and his bright arms clatter'd around him.
Teucer sprang to the front, all eager to plunder his armor ;
Hector hurl'd his weapon at Teucer, and narrowly miss'd him ;
—For he had mark'd its flight, and evaded the blow ;—but the jav'lin
Struck to the earth in its fury Amphimachus, offspring of Actor ;
E'en as he enter'd the fray on his breast came the point of the weapon :
Thund'ring he fell to the earth, and his mail clatter'd heavily o'er him.
Hector sprang to the front, for he mark'd and was eager to seize it,
Seize on the well-wrought helm that Amphimachus bore on his temples.
Ajax, spear in hand, charged, meeting the onset of Hector ;
Struck him, but wounded not; for the chief was accoutred in bright mail,
Fashion'd of temper'd brass ;—yet he dinted the boss of his buckler,
Hurling him bodily back ;—and, repulsed, he abandon'd the corpses,
Of the two hapless dead[c], to the hands of the sons of Achaia.
Unto Achaia's host was Amphimachus borne by the leaders
Of the Athenian levies; by Stichius and by Menestheus.
Imbrius lay as the prize of the terrible chiefs, the Ajaces.
E'en as a goat is carried by lions, who, seizing the carcass,
Snatching it off from the dogs that with sharp fangs hover around them,
High, in their blood-stain'd jaws, bear the quarry away through the thicket :
Thus, uplifting the body aloft, did the mighty Ajaces

[c] Imbrius and Amphimachus.

Plunder the glittering arms; and Oïleus, fiercely indignant,
Raging for Amphimachus, with his sword struck the head from the shoulders;
Seized it, and whirl'd it aloft:—and it roll'd as a ball thro' the battle;
Till before Hector's feet in the dust lay the head of his kinsman.[d]

Grieved and wroth at heart was the monarch, the mighty Poseidon,
Wroth at his grandson's[e] fate, thus slain in the arduous combat;
And he directed his course to the tents and the fleet of Achaia,
Rousing the Danaan hosts, and all eager for ill to the Trojans.
And, face to face, did the God meet Idomeneus, famed as a spearman,
Busied with one of his men, just carried away from the battle,
Wounded deep in the thigh with the point of a casual weapon:
So was he borne from fight—and the King was enjoining the surgeons,
E'en as he left his tent:—for his soul was all eager within him,
Hot to re-enter the war;—him address'd the great Ennosigaios,
Making his voice to resemble the voice of the son of Andræmon,[f]
Who, amid wide Pleuron, and the rough Calydonian highlands,
Govern'd Ætolia's sons; and was counted a God by his people.

"First of the sons of Crete, where, Idomeneus, mighty in council,
Where are the threats on Troy, which we heard from the sons of Achaia?"

Thus did the Cretan leader, Idomeneus, speak in rejoinder.

"Thoas, no man is in fault: there is none that I know 'mid the whole host
Worthy of blame in this:—we are, all of us, skilful in combat.
None holds back through fear; there is none who, thro' want of exertion,

[d] This is the first instance in the Iliad of the mutilation of a dead enemy; and it accords with the general character of the Oïlean Ajax. It will be observed that subsequently Hector purposes to treat with the same and even greater barbarity the corpse of Patroclus.

[e] Amphimachus. [f] Thoas.

Purposely shrinks from fight: yet still it appears that the Highest,
Even Zeus himself, is determined, here, distant from Argos,
Vanquish'd in nameless strife to demolish the sons of Achaia.
But do thou, even thyself—for of old thou wert stout in the combat,
Ready to fight thyself, and to stimulate others about thee—
Now be alive to the work, and exhort one by one thy companions!"

Then, in reply to the King, spake the great Earth-shaker, Poseidon.

"If any man can be found who to-day would abandon the conflict,
Ne'er may the fate be his to escape from the shores of the Troad!
Rather, his perishing corpse, let it go to the hounds and the vultures!
Handle thy spear then at once, let us enter the fight; thus united,
Though we be here but two, yet we shall not be useless assistants.
Even the force of the weak may avail if united together.
We, where the bravest combat, are fitted to share in the struggle."

Thus did the Sea-God speak—then mingled again in the battle:
Into his well-pitch'd tent did Idomeneus pass, for an instant;
Tighten'd his shining arms on his limbs; and he handled his jav'lins;
And took his way to the field:—bright in arms as the blaze of the lightning,
Wielded by Zeus himself from the glittering crest of Olympus;
Sign of wrath upon man, as the flashes illumine the heavens:
So, as the monarch moved, flash'd the light of his arms from his broad breast.
And, close at hand to his tent, he was met by his doughty attendant,
Merion; come from the field to the galleys in search of a weapon,
One he might take to the battle;—and thus did the monarch address him.

"Swift-footed offspring of Molus, Meriones, dearest attendant,
What is the pressing need which brings thee away from the battle?
Is it that thou art struck?—Has a missile wounded and gall'd thee?
Or dost thou bear from the field any message to me?—I am minded
Not to remain in the tents, but to mingle again in the combat."

Thus then, prudent in speech, did Meriones answer the great King.

"Leader, in council and field, of the Cretans gleaming in armor!
I am but now on my way to the tent, if by chance I may find there
Any remaining spear; for my own has been broken in combat;
Yonder, the haughty Deiphobus bears in his buckler my spear-head."

Thus then the Prince of Crete spake proudly again to his comrade.

"Enter and help thyself!—be it one or a score that thou needest:—
Plenty are there in the tent, all ranged by its glittering entrance;
All are Trojan spears; spoils won from the slain.—For my practice
Is not to combat afar, but to venture my life in the close-fight.
So have I stores of spears, and well-boss'd bucklers beside them,
Helmets and coats of mail; all gleaming as trophies of conquest."

Thus then, prudent in speech, did Meriones answer the monarch.

"I too keep in my tent, and the long dark hold of my galley,
Plenty of Trojan spoils:—far off for the need of the present.
For I can well assert that I ne'er have forgotten my manhood;
But, in the foremost ranks, am I known of the glorious combat;
Seen ever far in the van, when the storm of the battle is raging.
Some may be found, perchance, of Achaians gleaming in armor,
Knowing me not in battle:—thou art not of such, I am certain."

Thus did the Cretan monarch, Idomeneus, answer his comrade.

"Well is thy valor known:—no need is there thus to enforce it!
If by the navy's side we were bent, all the bravest among us,
Bent on a secret ambush; which most tries courage in all men,
Showing, in light of day, who's the hero, who is the dastard:—
For, of the coward, then, is the face seen changing its color;
Nor can he steady his mind, or retain a firm heart in his bosom;

But ever shifts his place; now standing on this, now on that foot;
And, in his breast, his heart beats quick with uneasy excitement;
Deeming his death is near; and his teeth they all chatter with terror:
While, of the gallant man, is the color unchanged; and though feeling
Not unmoved with awe, when he first has to stand in an ambush,
Yet is his earnest wish that the strife have a speedy commencement;—
Not even there, I say, could thy courage or strength be disputed.
Should it be ever thy lot to be stricken in fight by the foeman,
Back or neck of thine would never know point of a weapon:
Only through thy breast can a spear ever enter within thee,
Meeting thy onward course, to thy post in the front of the vanguard.
But let us stand not here, thus lingering, talking as children,
All unaccustom'd to war; lest we meet with unwelcome reprovers.
Enter my tent at once, and thence take a weapon to suit thee."

Thus did the monarch speak; and Meriones, rival of Arès,
Enter'd the tent in haste, and, selecting a weapon to suit him,
Left it and hasten'd on to Idomeneus, eager for battle.
As, all array'd for war, to the field rushes homicide Arès;
Terror, his son, at his side; who, unconscious of fear, and exulting
In his stalwart strength, chills the hearts of the sturdiest heroes;
As from the Thracian land to the Ephyri, gleaming in armor,
Or the magnanimous race of the Phlegyans, hurry the dread twain;
Aiding not both of the hosts, but to one giving glory and conquest;
So did the Cretan King and Meriones, leader of nations,
Go forth again to the war, each sheath'd in his glittering harness.
Merion first of the twain broke silence, and question'd his leader.

"Offspring of mighty Deucalion, where wilt thou enter the combat?
Seek we the right of the army? or shall we take ground in the centre?
Or shall we turn to the left?—For myself, I suspect that at *no* point
Is there a dearth of strife with the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia."[g]

[g] Commentators differ as to the meaning of the last line and a half: but the above

Thus did the Prince of Crete speak in answer again to his comrade.

"As to the central ships, there are plenty of leaders to guard them:
Both of the mighty Ajaces; and Teucer, of all the Achaians
First in archer-craft, and a stout man-at-arms in the combat.
These are sufficient to glut his taste for the war, and to drive back
Hector, the son of Priam, all hot tho' he is in the onset.
Hard will he find his task, be his lust what it will for the battle,
Taming the strength of these, and the all but invincible prowess,
Unto the hollow galleys to carry the flames; if the Highest
Does not himself descend, and hurl the bright flame at the vessels.
Not unto mortal man does the great Telamonian Ajax
Yield in stubborn combat.—To none, whom the fruits of Demèter
Feed; whom brass can pierce, or rocks overwhelm in the battle.
Even Achilleus' self, that breaker of ranks, would not drive him
Back in standing fight; tho' in swiftness of foot far beyond him.
Then to the left of the host let us move in support, and discover
What is our fate in fight; whether doom'd to give glory, or win it."

Thus did the monarch speak; and Meriones, rival of Arès,
Led on the way to the host, till they came where the King had suggested.
And when the Cretan King, fierce as flame, was discern'd by the Argives,
He and his charioteer, both gleaming in armor together,
Joyfully, and with a shout, did they welcome and gather around him.
Then, all in even scales, hung the strife at the prows of the galleys.
As on a gusty day, when the winds blow in circling eddies,
Whirling a cloud of dust in their course by the side of the highways,
And the whole face of heaven is dimm'd by the pestilent vapor,
So met the hostile hosts in the battle with terrible ardor;
Seeking each other's hearts with the points of their murderous weapons.
Bristled the fatal field with the long bright spears of the warriors;

construction seems to be the best, and most in accordance with the reply given by Idomeneus.

Spears whose points had tasted the flesh of the brave.—The effulgence
Flashing, in brazen light, from the glittering cones of the helmets,
And from the coats of mail, and the radiant orbs of the bucklers,
Blinded beholders' eyes.—Hard-hearted the man who, beholding,
Viewing a strife so stern, had smiled, nor had sorrow'd to see it.

Two of the issue of Cronos, with opposite feeling and purpose,
Guided the mournful field, and wrought for the deaths of the heroes.
Zeus, for the Trojan hosts and for Hector designing the conquest,
Deeming to honour thus the swift-footed Achilles—unwilling
That of Achaia's armies the whole should be slain in the Troad,
If unto Thetis' self and her son were due glory awarded.
While, on the Argive side, to their hosts did the mighty Poseidon,
Leaving the gray-blue main, give secret aid ; for the Sea-God
Mourn'd for the Argives' slain ; and with Zeus he was fiercely indignant.
Equal in sooth were the twain in descent, and the same was their birthplace;
Zeus was the elder-born, and endow'd with more excellent wisdom ;
Wherefore, in open guise, did the other forbear to assist them ;
Yet, clad in human form, did he traverse the host and arouse it.
So, on adverse sides, did the combatants hither and thither
Sway, now here, now there, the great cord of the battle, which join'd them:—
Proof against force and fraud—and many went down in the contest.

Then, 'mid the Danaan ranks, though gray, yet a lord of the battle,
Crete's proud King upon Troy charged, scattering all in his onset ;
Vanquishing Othryoneus, who had dwelt in the wall of Cabèsus ;
And, for the lust of fame, had come, but come late, to the contest :
Wooing a daughter of Priam, his portionless daughter Cassandra,
Portionless save in her beauty, tho' much he professed for a dowry,
Even to drive from the Troad the hosts of the sons of Achaia.
And unto him did the King give an ear, and he promised to yield her
Unto his suit ; and he combated, trusting in vain to the King's word.
Him did the Cretan Prince, as he came on stalking before him,
Aim at, nor miss'd his mark. Through the brazen plates of his cuirass

Pass'd the unerring lance, deep traversing through to his midriff.
Thund'ring he roll'd in the dust: and his foe spake exultingly o'er him.

"Come, tell us, what is the value, Othryoneus, now of thy promise,
Made unto Dardan Priam—his gift of his daughter in marriage?
Do as thy words proclaim'd, and I praise thee as first among mortals.
But surely *we* can promise, and do what we may to perform it;
Promise to thee for a bride of Atrides' daughters the fairest;
Brought from her Argive home; if thou wilt but unite with our armies,
Helping our hosts in the storm of Troy's well-inhabited fortress.
But to discuss the proposals 'twere better, by far, to the galleys
Hence to retire at once.—And we will not be hard in the bargain!"

Thus spake the Cretan Prince; and seizing his foe by the ankle,
Dragg'd him away from fight.—Forth Asius dash'd to avenge him;
Fighting on foot in front of his steeds; their breath on his shoulders
Falling; for close at hand they were rein'd by the driver:—their master
Hoped to hit Idomeneus;—but the Cretan was ready before him;
Striking him full on the throat, and the spear stood bloody beyond it.
Prone there sank he in dust:—so tumbles an oak, or a poplar,
Or some vigorous pine;—which the woodcutters, high on the mountain,
Fell with glittering axes, to form a big mast for the galleys.
So, in the front of his steeds and his car, far extended before them,
Lay the expiring chief: as he clutch'd the red earth in the death-pang.
As to his charioteer, he remain'd as if reft of his senses;
Nor does he even dare to retreat from the hands of the foemen,
Wheeling his steeds for flight:—till Antilochus, ready for combat,
Struck him beneath his waist; and the spear thro' the plates of his cuirass
Held its unerring course; deep traversing thro' to the midriff.
And, with a groan of anguish, he tumbled to earth from the chariot:
And the majestic steeds did Antilochus, offspring of Nestor,
Drive, from the Trojan lines, to the well-mail'd ranks of Achaia.

Forth did Deiphobus rush, full near in the fray, to the Cretan,

Madden'd at Asius' fall—then darted his glittering jav'lin :
But, all quick to perceive and prompt in avoiding a death-stroke,
Firmly the Cretan stood ; and stoop'd 'neath his circular buckler
Stiff with tough bull-hides, with bright brass riveted o'er them ;
That which he bore on his arm, with two stout handles within it.
Cover'd secure he remain'd, as the spear flew whizzing above it ;
Passing so close in flight, that the buckler in reverberation
Sounded :—and not in vain did it leave the strong hand of the sender :
Striking a chief thro' the liver, Hypsènor, shepherd of people,
Hippasus' warlike son : his knees sank fainting beneath him.
Then did Deiphobus thus shout aloud with a fierce exultation.

" Asius—though he be dead—yet is not unavenged !—I assert it !—
That, though the chief may be bound for the terrible portal of Hades,
He will be sooth'd in mind ;—for I send an attendant behind him."[h]

Thus did the Trojan boast :—sore at heart were the Argives about him.
Chiefly he roused in the mind of Antilochus wish for reprisal :
He, all grieved as he was, yet he would not desert his companion ;
But ran in haste to the front ; and there put his buckler before him :
Till he was borne from the field in the arms of two trusty attendants ;
Even the mighty Alastor ; and Echius' offspring, Mecisteus :
Who, with deep-drawn groans, bare the body away to the galleys.
Nor did the Cretan King put a check to his prowess :—he purposed
Either the gloom of night should envelop some chief of the Trojans ;
Or he himself should fall, in defence of the sons of Achaia.
Then did the son beloved of the high-born Aësyètus,
Gallant Alcathous, die :—(he had married a child of Anchìses,
Even his eldest daughter, the beautiful Hippodameia :
She, in her maiden youth, was loved by her father and mother,
Loved from their heart of hearts :—for none of her early companions
Rivall'd her form, or skill, or graces of mind ;—and excelling

[h] This speech of Deiphobus seems to contain a double sarcasm ;—directed as much against Asius, whose pompous character is repeatedly referred to, as against Hypsènor.

Thus, she was wedded to one who excell'd all the youth of the Troad.)—
Now did he find his fate from Idomeneus' spear: for Poseidon
Dazzled his brilliant eyes, and fetter'd the limbs of the hero.
So that he neither retreated, nor turn'd from the blow to evade it;
But as a rock-hewn column, or tree with high branches above it,
Motionless stood to his death; while Idomeneus, charging upon him,
Right in the midst of his breast drove the point of his spear;—and the cuirass
Shiver'd upon his body; it oft had averted a death-stroke;
Now, as the spear broke through, right harsh was the clank of the harness.
Thund'ring he fell to the earth: in his heart the long spear of the Cretan
Stood; and his last strong gasps made the lance, to the spike at the butt-end,
Vibrate:—until his strength sank under the terrible death-stroke.
Then, in his turn, did Idomeneus shout in his fierce exultation.

"Am I mistaken, Deiphobus! if I affirm that the balance,
—Three against one,—is ours?—Despite of thine insolent boasting?—
Fool!—Try chances thyself, stand face to face boldly against me!
So may I let thee know of what race come I hither among you;
Even of Zeus; who begat great Minos, Lord of the Cretans:
Minos left as his issue the noble Deucalion: he next
Had for a son myself: high monarch of numerous nations
In the wide Cretan isle.—'Tis thence that my galleys have borne me
Here; as a woe unto thee, to thy father, and all of the Trojans."

Thus did the Cretan speak:—sorely doubted in mind his opponent;
Whether to beat a retreat and to seek for some one of the Trojans
As his ally in arms, or to venture alone on the combat.
Thus as he ponder'd it o'er, he resolved to apply for assistance
Unto the mighty Ænèas;—and him did he find in the rearward
Standing, incensed, as of wont, with Priam the King:—for the hero
—Known as a stout man-at-arms—yet was never admitted to honor.
Standing near to the chieftain, he rapidly spake and address'd him.

"Thou art a man well known in the Council of Troy!—It behoves thee
Now to avenge thy kinsman:—if kindred is able to move thee.
Unto thy brother-in-law give assistance at once:—in the palace
Oft in thy tender days, when thou wert but a child, has he nursed thee.
Now is he stretch'd on the field by Idomeneus, famed as a spearman."

Thus did the Trojan speak, and excited the wrath in his bosom.
Forth, all eager for fight, did he march to encounter the Cretan.
Yet not in fear, as a child, did Idomeneus tremble before him;
But stood firm to the shock:—as a wild boar stands on the mountains,
Trusting his own great strength; and awaits for the rabble of hunters,
Deep in his lonely lair; and his arch'd back bristles above him;
And with a lurid glare do his eyes beam bright; and he gnashes
Loudly his shining tusks; and he longs for the dogs and the hunters.
Thus did the spear-famed hero, Idomeneus, stand;—nor retreated
From the impetuous charge of the Dardan leader:—but shouted
To his compeers in arms;—to Ascalaphus, and Apharèus,
Merion then, and Deipyrus too, and the offspring of Nestor.
These did he urge to the fight; and rapidly thus he address'd them.

"Friends, I am here single-handed: assist me at once!—for a hero,
One whose prowess I dread, moves rapidly on to assail me:
Even Ænèas' self: well known by the deaths of his foemen:
Blest with that greatest gift,—with the flower and vigor of manhood.
Were we but match'd in years as in stout resolution for combat,
Quickly the game were play'd—either *he* should win glory or *I* would."

Thus did the Cretan speak; and they all, with unanimous ardor,
Closed up the ranks by his side; their bucklers slanted above them.
And, on the part of Troy, did Ænèas call to his comrades;
Paris, and mighty Deiphobus too, and the godlike Agènor;
Chiefs who, allied with him, led the armies of Troy; and the people
Follow'd behind their chiefs:—as the sheep upon leaving the pasture
Follow the ram to the water: rejoicing the heart of the shepherd.

So was Ænèas glad, and his heart rose light in his bosom ;
Marking the martial host ; how it gather'd and follow'd around him.

Hand then to hand, did the foes o'er Alcathous mingle in combat,
Arm'd with long bright spears.—Loud sounded the brass of the armor
Guarding the warriors' breasts, as the blows, interchanged in the thick fray,
Fell upon either side.—Two leaders were eminent o'er them,
Rivals in battle of Arès ;—Idomeneus here ; there Ænèas :
Each chief eager alike that his spear may be flesh'd in his foeman.
First, flew Ænèas' lance at Idomeneus' breast : but the Cretan,
Marking his foe in time, stepp'd aside, and avoided the death-stroke ;
So that the erring spear, sent in vain from the arm of the Dardan,
Leaving his strong right-hand, in the earth stood quivering bloodless.
Then did the Cretan King hit Œnomaus, striking him front-wise,
Rending his hollow mail ; and the spear thro' the midst of his entrails
Tore : and he roll'd in the dust, and clutch'd at the earth in the death-pang.
Forth from the corpse of his foe did the victor, tearing his long lance,
Win it again :—but to plunder the glittering arms of the brave dead
Fail'd at the last ; for sore was he gall'd by the flight of the jav'lins.
Nor did his limbs, as in youth, bear him stiffly along, if attempting,
Either to seek his spear, or to baffle an eager opponent.
And, if in standing fight he protected his head with his right-hand,
Yet, if he wish'd to retreat, his steps moved wearily backwards.
Thus, as he slowly withdrew, did Deiphobus, burning with hatred,
Hatred of ancient date, send a bright spear whizzing against him :
Erring indeed from the mark ;—yet Ascalaphus died by the spear-stroke ;
Arès' favorite son ; for the point of the spear thro' his shoulder
Pierced : and he roll'd in the dust, and clutch'd at the earth in the death-pang.

Nor did the slain man's father, the loud-voiced, terrible Arès,
Know that his own loved son had been struck in the arduous contest.
Shrouded in golden clouds, on the loftiest peak of Olympus,
Bound by the will of Zeus, he in anger reclined :—and around him

All the Immortal Gods were unwillingly stay'd from the battle.

Hand then to hand, did the foes o'er Ascalaphus mingle in combat.
Bright was the warrior's helmet :—Deiphobus rushing upon him
Seized it :—but then with a bound did Meriones, rival of Arès,
Leaping along on the Trojan, transfix his arm ; and the helmet,
Towering crest and all, loud sounded on earth as he dropp'd it.
Merion, leaping again with a bound on his foe, as a vulture,
Tore from his wounded arm the long weight of the spear ; and the Trojan
Back, to the troop of his comrades, retreated, in haste : and Polites,
Even his mother's son, with his arms encircled around him,
Led him away from fight ; till they came to the place where his war-steeds
Stood ; for safe in the rear of the war and the roar of the battle
There they awaited their lord, with his car and attendant behind them.
So, to the walls of the town did they carry him, groaning in anguish ;
Gall'd by his recent wound : and the blood oozed, trickling, from it.
And, as he drove from the field, in his rear rose the roar of the combat.

Then did Ænèas slay Apharèus, son of Calètor :
Striking his lance's point on his throat as he turn'd to oppose him.
Low, on the further side, did his head fall :—helmet and buckler
Weigh'd him down to the earth ; and death spread its torpor around him.
Then upon Thoòn Antilochus,—marking the foe when retreating,—
Charged, with spear in hand ; and the trenchant point of the weapon
Struck, and divided the vein which runs to the neck from the back-bone ;
Cutting it sheerly asunder : he, rolling supine in the tumult,
Stretched his hands, in vain, to his friends for the succor that came not.
Then, springing forward, Antilochus tore from his shoulders the bright arms ;
Turning his looks all round :—for the soldiers of Troy in a circle
Proved, with the points of their lances, the orb of his shield ; but their efforts
Might not avail to mark with a scratch the fair flesh of the hero,
Nestor's valiant son :—for him did the mighty Poseidon
Keep with unceasing care, and guard 'mid the storm of the jav'lins.
Lack of foes had he none, there were plenty in front : but he menaced

All, in turn :—and his weapon had never repose for an instant :
It was in constant use ; ever scheming the death of a foeman,
Either by distant wound, or blow dealt in closer encounter.
Nor, 'mid the press of fight, did he 'scape the keen eye of a Trojan;
Adamas, Asius' son : for he charged, spear in hand, on the buckler
Carried by Nestor's son, full striking the boss ; but the weapon,
Weaken'd by force divine—by the force of the mighty Poseidon,
God of the purple locks—as a charr'd stake, shiver'd : the spear-head
Stood in the Argive's shield : half the shaft fell in splinters before him.
Back, to avoid his fate, fled the foe to the ranks of his comrades :
But, as he turn'd in flight, did Meriones follow, and struck him
Low underneath his navel : a spot where the pang is the keenest
Unto ill-fated men, when feeling the stroke of a foeman.
There did the jav'lin enter :—he, bent down over the weapon,
Panted, as pants an ox; whom the herdsmen, high on the mountains,
Bind, and drag in his bondage reluctant away to the lowlands.
So did the stricken youth pant awhile on the spear :—but his anguish
Knew not a lengthen'd date ;—for Meriones, standing above him,
Tore from his body the spear ; and night overshadow'd his eyelids.

Helenus, swaying aloft his sharp bright Thracian broadsword,
Tumbled Deipyrus over—and struck from his temples the helmet ;
Rolling it low in the dust—there it lay, till some son of Achaia,
One of the warring host, saw the prize at his feet, and secured it :
As, on the owner's eyes, dark night spread its shadowy curtain.
Grief fill'd the soul of Atrides, the warrior-chief Menelaus :
And on the Trojan prince did he rush, with the menace of anger,
Shaking his pointed spear—while the foe bent his bow to oppose him.
Thus did the chieftains encounter—the one with the point of his jav'lin
Eager to pierce his foe, who stood with arrow on bowstring.
Priam's son shot first ;—and his shaft struck the King on the cuirass,
Full on the bend of the armor :—and leapt back, blunted and bloodless.
As, on a threshing-floor, when a peasant winnows the harvest ;
And, as he plies his task, exposed to the blast of the breezes,

Leap, from its wide-spread surface, the dark-skinn'd beans and the vetches;
So, from the cuirass'd breast of the glorious King Menelaus,
Bounding afar in recoil, in the dust lay the shaft of his foeman.
But at the Trojan's hand, which was grasping the bow, did Atrides
Aim with his well-poised spear:—and he miss'd not the mark:—but the spear-head
Pierced thro' the warrior's hand, and fasten'd the hand to the bow-staff.
Fearing a blow more fatal, the Trojan rush'd to his own friends;
Dangling his injured hand, with the long spear trailing beside it.
Until the spear was drawn by the high-minded leader Agènor;
Who, for the hand itself, bound it up in a bandage of woollen,
Form'd from a soldier's sling, which he gave to his wounded commander.

Then did Pisander, full on the front of the King Menelaus,
Rush:—for his evil fate and his destiny hurried him onward;
There, by thy hand, Menelaus, to fall in the terrible combat!
So, when the foes coming on stood near at hand, facing each other,
First flew Atrides' spear;—but it pass'd by the flank of the Trojan.
Then did Pisander, full on the shield of the King Menelaus,
Charge with protended lance: but the shield was unpierced by the spear-point;
Perfect the buckler remain'd, and the javelin splinter'd upon it,
Breaking the head from the shaft:—yet dreams of victory cheer'd him.
Baring then his sword—bright studded in silver—Atrides
Rush'd on Pisander's front;—and Pisander, from under his buckler,
Drew forth, of burnish'd metal, a battle-axe, hafted in olive,
Long and bright in the shaft:—thus stood the two martial opponents.
Under the sweep of the axe, cloven right away, sheer from the helmet,
Tumbled the monarch's crest: but his sword smote the face of the Trojan
Over the nasal ridge: and it shatter'd the bone; and the eyeballs,
Forced from the sockets, fell in the red dust bloody before him[1].

[1] This description is very remarkable. In this, as in other similar cases of minute descriptions of wounds, the reader can scarcely help believing that Homer wrote from

Backward he roll'd and sank:—while the King set his foot on his bosom:
Tore off the blood-stain'd spoils, exclaiming in triumph above him.

"Thus, ye, at last, I suppose, will be quit of the Danaan galleys,
Overweening race, unsated of war and of carnage!
Ye have transgressions enough!—sins of insult and infamy soil you!—
Sins, which—dogs that ye are—ye have sinn'd against me;—nor regarded,
Fear'd not the fatal wrath of the Deity, rolling the thunder,
Even of Xenian[k] Zeus:—who will yet lay your city in ashes.
Ye, who the spouse of my youth, and my treasures besides in abundance,
Bore from my palace away;—from my home where she kindly received you[l].
Now—not contented with this—ye are seen in the front of the galleys,
Theatening fire to them, and death to the sons of Achaia.
Hot as ye are for the fight, ye perchance may be staid from the combat!
O Father Zeus! unto thee we attribute a wisdom, exceeding
That of both men and Gods!—is it true that all this can be *thy* work?
Dost thou—in very truth—have a favor for men of injustice?
These proud sons of Troy; who have ever an arrogant daring,
Men who never are sated with battle and mutual carnage.
All things tend to satiety:—sleep, the endearments of lovers,
Music's soothing strains, and the measured steps of the dancers;
All these things will a man seek with keener enjoyment than battle;
Seek, and then dismiss:—Troy's thirst for the battle is quenchless!"

Thus as he spake, from his foe, did the blameless chief Menelaus,
Tear off the blood-stain'd spoils, and give to his martial attendants;
And turning round to the war, mix'd again in the fight with the foremost.
Then was he seen and attack'd by Harpalion,—who had attended
Guarding the side of his King and his father, Pylæmenes, marching

personal observation. At the same time it is difficult to understand how the eyeballs could be not only forced but actually separated from the sockets by a mere sword-cut: or, as in the case of Cebriones (book xvi, v. 741), by the blow of a stone.

[k] The protector of strangers, and of the rites of hospitality.

[l] This reference to Helen is inconsistent with the notion that Menelaus considered her as a person principally, if at all, in fault.

Unto the Trojan soil;—never doomed to revisit his own land.
He, close by, in the fray, struck the boss of the circular buckler
Carried by Atreus' son; but the spear bent blunted upon it.
Back, to avoid his fate, did he fly to the troop of his comrades,
Casting his glances around, lest a spear should be planted within him:
Him, as he thus went off, did Meriones hit with an arrow
Full on his nether side, by the buttock;—the point of the sharp shaft
Drove right thro', passing under the bone, by the midst of the bladder.
Down, on the spot, did he sink;—and there, in the hands of his comrades,
Lay, extended at length; like a crush'd worm dying before them;
Panting his life away—as his dark blood dripp'd to the greensward.
Soon was his breathless corpse, by the stout Paphlagonian levies,
Placed on a lofty car, and, heavy at heart, they convey'd it
Unto the sacred town: and his father follow'd lamenting,
Weeping his offspring's fate, and his death unavenged and unheeded[m].

Paris beheld his death; and the anger was kindled within him:
For he had been his guest, and of many beside of his nation:
So, with indignant heart, he directed a shaft from his bowstring.
There was an Argive chief, he was son of the seer Polyïdes,
Blest with wealth and valor:—Euchenor; who 'bided at Corinth,
Till, tho' he knew his fate, he ascended the side of his galley:
For he had heard from his father—the seer Polyïdes had warn'd him—
Either by fell disease he would wearily die in his chamber;
Or, 'mid Achaia's armies, be slain by the hands of the Trojans.
So, he preferr'd quick death, to a fine[n] by the sons of Achaia,
Slow-consuming disease, and the sorrows attendant upon it.
Him, 'twixt ear and jaw, did the arrow pierce;—and the fierce soul
Fled from the fainting limbs, and death spread its shadows around him.

Thus did the combat burn, like the heat of a great conflagration.

[m] This and the previous line are of doubtful authority.
[n] For non-service.

Hector, beloved of Zeus, knew nought of its chances ; unheeding
How, on the left of the field, by the galleys, his people were falling,
Slaughter'd by Argive hands :—and then had the sons of Achaia
Won full meed of fame ;—such force the great Ennosigaios
Breath'd into Argive hearts, and gave his own vigor to aid them.
Hector was combating still where he first pass'd the gates and the ramparts ;
Breaking the serried ranks of the stout men-at-arms of the Argives.
There were the galleys of Ajax, the galleys of Protesilàus,
Hard by the dark gray sea ;—ranged in line on the beach ;—and above them
Lowliest tower'd the wall :—for there, strong in fight as a tempest,
Gather'd the Argive host, thick-serried, the men and the war-steeds.
There, Bœotia's troops, and Ionia's, clad in their long robes,
Locris' and Phithia's troops, and Epeia's gallant contingent,
Met his attack on the fleet, and held him at bay ;—but avail'd not
Further ; nor from their front drove the fiery valor of Hector.
First stood a chosen band of Athenian troops :—and Menestheus,
Peteus' son, was there, at the head of the ranks ;—and to aid him
Stichius, Pheidas too, and the stalwart Bias ;—Epeia
Under Amphìon next, under Dracius too, and Phyleides.
Phthia's troops were commanded by Medon and gallant Podarces.
Medon, one of the twain, was a base-born son of Oïleus,
Godlike chief—brother-born of the rapid Oïlean Ajax.
But, far away from his home, he in Phylacè tarried a long time ;
For he had slain one of kin to his father's spouse, Eriòpis.
Iphiclus, Phylax's son, was the father of gallant Podarces.
Both these chiefs in the van of the Phthians, gleaming in armor,
Fought to defend their ships, with the mighty Bœotian levies.
Not for the shortest space did the rapid Oïlean Ajax
Part in fight from the side of his great Telamonian namesake.
But as, in new-plough'd field, two oxen drag at the ploughshare,
Straining with equal force to the toilsome task, and the sweat-drops
Trickle profusely down from the roots of their horns to the dark earth :
And as they wearily march, in the furrow, which traces the outline,
Only the polish'd yoke keeps the heads of the oxen asunder ;

Thus did the two great chiefs, side by side, labor hard in the combat.
Many and stout in fight, of the great Telamonian Ajax,
Stood the attendant train ; ever ready to carry his buckler,
When overtoil'd and heated his knees grew weary beneath him.
As to Oïleus' son, not a Locrian stood to attend him.
For, it was not their wont hand to hand to encounter in combat ;
For, they had neither helms, brass-cover'd and crested in horsehair ;
Nor had they well-orb'd shields; nor strong spears, shafted with ash-wood.
Nought had they but bows, and arrows, and slings, to rely on ;
Such were the arms that they brought to the Ilian wall ;—and incessant
Shower'd their shafts and stones ;—and shatter'd the ranks of the foemen.
Thus, in the front of the fight, while their comrades[o], gleaming in bright arms,
Strove in stubborn strife, with Troy and the valor of Hector ;
They, unseen in the rear, plied bows and slings : and the Trojans
Cool'd in their ardor for battle : so galling the storm of the missiles.

Then would the Trojan host, unto Ilion, swept by the breezes,
Back from the fleet and tents, have retreated with shame and disaster :
But that Polydamas came up to Hector, and thus he address'd him.

"Hector ; the task is hard of the man who attempts to persuade thee[p].
Grant, that to thee above all has the God given strength for the combat ;
Yet, do not therefore deem that thy counsel is better than others'.
Know, it is not thy lot thus to stand as the foremost in all things !
One excels, through the Gods, in all things appertaining to warfare ;
One excels in the dance ; and another in harping and music :
One—whom broad-brow'd Zeus blesses thus—in the depth of his bosom
Bears a discerning mind ;—that gift which so many are saved by ;
That which saves great states ;—that gift which the Giver excels in.
Therefore I venture to speak, and to say what I deem is the best thing.
Mark, like a fiery wreath, how the battle is burning around thee !

[o] The soldiers of the Telamonian Ajax.
[p] See Il. xii, v. 231.

How—since we mounted the wall—of the valorous troops of the Trojans,
Some rest apart on their arms ;—and some, in the front of the galleys,
Wage an unequal strife, with foes overwhelming in numbers.
Hold then back for a space ; here summon the bravest among us :
So may we ponder well, and advise on some system of action ;
Whether it be that we fall in a mass on the Danaan galleys ;
Trusting the God will bestow on us strength for the fight :—or retreating
Wend in safety again our way from the fleet.—For my own part
I have my fears, that the debt incurr'd by the sons of Achaia,
Yesternight, may be paid.—One man[q], never sated of battle,
Rests in the fleet :—nor as yet, do I think, has abandon'd the contest."

Thus did Polydamas speak : and Hector approvingly hearken'd.
And in his shining arms to the earth sprang he down from the war-steeds[r],
Spake to the prudent chief, and rapidly thus he address'd him.

" Gather thou here, then, together, the best and the bravest among us !
I will be off to the flank, and there mingle awhile in the battle ;
And will return to my post, when I thus have encouraged our comrades."

Thus did the warrior speak ; and then, with a cry, as an eagle[s],
Flew thro' the ranks of Troy, and the ranks of the aids of the Trojan.
While about Panthus' issue, Polydamas, friend of the valiant,
Gather'd his men in a mass, upon hearing the war-cry of Hector.
So, 'mid the foremost ranks, did he search for, hoping to find there,
Helenus, mighty in prowess, Deiphobus too, and the valiant
Adamas, Asius' son ; and Asius, Hyrtacus' offspring.

[q] Achilles.

[r] From this and subsequent passages it appears that some of the Trojan chariots had been brought within the fortifications.

[s] The translator has adopted the emendation of Professor Newman ; which, by altering a few letters in the Greek, transforms the " snowy mountain " of previous versions into a bird of prey : a figure which is certainly more in unison with the " cry " and the " flight " or " swoop " of Hector through the ranks than the commonly received simile.

These, yet alive and unwounded, he never was fated to see more.
Some, in the mortal strife, 'neath the prows of the sons of Achaia,
Slaughter'd by Argive hands, had yielded their lives in the contest:
Some, in the city's wall, lay wounded by spear or by arrow.
One man alone did he find, on the left of the terrible battle,
Fair-tress'd Helen's consort, the beautiful chief Alexander,
Cheering his comrades around, and urging them on to the struggle.
Standing by side of the chief, he address'd him in bitter invective.

"Paris!—Beautiful curse! woman-mad, and seducer of women!
Where is Deiphobus gone? Where is Helenus, mighty in prowess?—
Adamas, Asius' son?—and Asius, Hyrtacus' offspring?
What has become of Othryoneus? Now from her loftiest turrets
Ilion nods to her fall;—and perdition as surely awaits thee."

Spake in reply to his brother the godlike chief Alexander.

"Hector, thy censure lights where no censure, at present, is needed.
What if, at other times, I have shown myself slack in the battle?
Neither thyself would affirm that my mother has made me a dastard.
Here, since first by the fleet thou hast fought in the midst of thy comrades,
We have, in closest strife, been engaged with the Danaan armies;
Strife which knows not pause.—Those leaders have fallen beside me:
Helenus, mighty in war, and Deiphobus, only excepted.
They, or I much mistake, have abandon'd the battle:—disabled,
Pierced thro' the hand with spears:—though their lives have been saved by Cronion.
Lead thou on then at once where thy might and thy valor impel thee;
We, with equal heat, will be close at thy back:—I affirm it:—
I shall be ready to do whatsoever my strength can accomplish.
Man, whatsoever his will, in his strength finds a limit to daring."

Thus did the Trojan speak;—thus appeasing the mind of his brother.
Turning, he bent his course where the strife and the carnage were deepest,

All round Cebriones, and Polydamas, notable hero,
Phalces and Orthæus, and the godlike chief Polyphœtes,
Palmys, Ascanius too; and Hippotion[t] also, and Morys.
It was but yesternoon they arrived from Ascania's valleys,
Taking their turn of war[u];—now Zeus drives them into the battle.
Onward they press'd to the fight—strong and fierce as the blast of a tempest
Which 'neath the thunder-cloud, from Zeus, sweeps over the champain,
Till, with a mighty crash, it alights on the sea; and beneath it
Roll up the heaving waves upon Ocean eternally-sounding,
Curling their foaming crests;—each surge chasing surges before it.
So in their serried order the Trojans, gleaming in armor,
Rank ranged close upon rank, moved to war in the rear of their leaders.
Hector, the son of the King,—not fiercer the homicide Arès,—
March'd in their foremost van:—his round shield blazing before him,
Solid with tough bulls-hides, and the strong brass gleaming above them:
And on the warrior's brows shone the helm with a tremulous lustre.
Moving with cautious steps he attempted the phalanx on all points;
Testing the ranks to prove if the soldiers were steady against him:
Yet did he fail to affrighten the hearts of the sons of Achaia.
Ajax challenged him first, forth loftily striding to meet him.

"Why not a step yet nearer?—Dost hope at a distance to frighten
Thus the Achaian host?—We are not unaccustom'd to battle:
'Tis but the scourge of Zeus that has humbled the sons of Achaia.
All of thy thoughts, perchance, now are bent on the speedy destruction
Of the Achaian galleys.—Stout hands are there still to protect them!
Sooner than that shall happen, thine own well-inhabited city,
Storm'd and sack'd, shall be thrown as a spoil to our conquering armies.
And for thyself, I suspect, that the day is not far, when in terror

[t] The common reading is "Morys, son of Hippotion:" but this is probably a corruption of the text. See and compare Il. xiv, v. 314; it would be impossible to alter the Greek of the latter line so as to make it correspond with the common reading of Il. xiii, v. 792, but the converse alteration is free from difficulty.

[u] That is, as reliefs to former contingents.

Thou shalt uplift thine hands unto Zeus and the rest of the great Gods,
Praying the wings of hawks may be slower in flight than thy war-steeds,
Scouring the dusty plain as they carry thee off to thy ramparts."

Thus, as the chieftain spake, on his right, high aloft in the blue sky,
Floated a soaring eagle :—loud shouted the sons of Achaia,
Cheering the bird of good omen :—and thus spake the warrior Hector.

"What dost thou venture to say—vain-blustering, blundering, Ajax?
Would that I were but as sure I were child of the Ægis-wielder,
Even of Father Zeus, or that Herè's self were my parent,
That I were honour'd the same as Apollo, or Pallas Athenè,
As I am sure that to-day rises heavy with woe to the Argives!
Rises to all their hosts!—Thyself shalt be slaughter'd among them,
If thou wilt only dare to abide for the stroke of my war-spear,
Rending thy delicate[x] flesh!—Thou shalt die by the ships of Achaia,
Yielding an ample meal for the vultures of Troy and her wild-dogs!"

Speaking he led the attack :—and his troops with unanimous ardor
Rush'd in their leader's steps, with a terrible clamor behind him :
While, on the other side, with like clamor and ardor, the Argives
Stood to the coming strife ; and awaited the shock of the Trojans.
E'en to the splendor of Zeus, rose the roar of encountering nations.

[x] In the original, "lily-white." An expression not at all in accordance with the ideas ordinarily entertained of Ajax. See note to Il. vii, v. 212. The narrative is taken up again in Il. xiv, v. 402 ; where Hector, by a poetical justice of retribution commonly observable in the Iliad, instead of wounding Ajax, is struck down and disabled by him.

BOOK THE FOURTEENTH.

"Cronĭdes now is beguiled by seductions of Sleep and of Herè."

Nestor,—the wine on the board,—was not deaf to the roar of the combat.
But, to Asclepius' son, did he hastily turn, and address him.

"What is to be the result of the present conjuncture, Machaon?
Louder, about our ships, rise the shouts of encountering foemen!
Sit thou here in peace; and drink the red vintage before thee;
Until the bath is warm'd, by the fair-hair'd slave Hecamedè;
She, with the tepid stream, shall the gore wash away from thy shoulder.
I will away with speed, to look out from some post of advantage."

Thus did the elder speak: and he caught up a buckler beside him,
Just as it lay in the tent:—'twas the shield of his son Thrasymedes,
Gleaming with burnish'd brass;—for the son had the shield of the father.
Then took a stalwart spear; well 'pointed with brass was the spear-head;
And went out from his tent—thence to look upon shame and disaster;
E'en on the routed host; and, pressing the rear of the routed,
Troy's exulting sons; and the gaps in the wall of Achaia!
As when a deep ground-swell just heaves in its first undulations,
Marking, on Ocean's face, that a storm is at work in the distance,
Though all around be peace; and the sea, neither this way nor that way,
Rolls; till the blast sweeps up, and determines the course of the tempest:
So, did the old man's mind sway with doubt; and he deeply debated
Whether to bend his steps where the Danai labor'd in combat;
Or unto Atreus' son, Agamemnon, shepherd-of-people.
Better at last he esteem'd it, more fit for the pressing occasion,

That he should seek Atrides. Around him the people were falling
Slaughter'd in that fierce strife. Loud sounded the brass of their harness,
Stricken by eager swords, and by partisans wielded in both hands.

Soon did Nestor encounter the high-born kings of the people,
Coming away by the fleet;—even those who were wounded in combat;
Tydeus' son, and Odysseus, and Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
For, from the fight far away, were the black ships drawn up in long lines
Close by the dark-gray sea:—the first-comers were ranged, as the first-rank,
Far, on the open shore:—'neath their prows rose the fence of the rampart:
Nor, all wide as it was, could the bay, in the stretch of its sea-shore,
Take in the whole of the fleet:—but the people were straighten'd for quarters.
Therefore, line upon line, were the galleys arranged; and their numbers
Fill'd up the whole of the bay; from headland even to headland.
So, on their spears supported, all eager to look on the battle,
Came the assembled kings; and their hearts in the depths of their bosoms
Lay depress'd and sad:—when they suddenly came on the old man;
And, lower still, at the sight, sank the soul of the kings of Achaia.
Spake thus at once to the elder the King of men—Agamemnon.

"Nestor, Neleus' son! Great glory of all the Achaians!
Why do we find thee here? What has driven thee off from the battle?
Much do I fear lest the ravings of Hector receive a fulfilment;
All that the boaster spake when he stood 'mid the Trojans in Council:
Saying, he never again would retreat from the fleet to the town-walls,
Ere our ships were burnt, and our armies were slaughter'd beside them.
Thus did the Trojan boast; and his boastings are being accomplish'd.
Gods! can it be, that the rest of the well-mail'd sons of Achaia
Hold their chief in hate, and partake of the wrath of Achilleus?
Having no heart for the fight, though it rages in front of their galleys?"

Answer'd the monarch, thus, the Gerenian horseman, Nestor.

"Such is the aspect now of affairs: and the Lord of the thunder,

Zeus himself, e'en thus, and no otherwise, seems to decree it.
Low in the dust is the wall; that rampart we fondly relied on
As an impregnable fence, to the army itself and the galleys.
Up to the front of the ships come the roar and the rout of the combat,
In unceasing whirl.—You may look on the scene, and discern not,
Whether Achaia's hosts now give or gain ground in the thick fray:
So intermix'd is the slaughter; so deep is the roar of the battle.
Let us consult and think, with a view to the present conjuncture,
What is the wisest course. To the field I would never persuade you
Back: for a wounded man is at best an indifferent soldier."

Spake, in reply to the elder, the King of men—Agamemnon.

"Nestor, as things are thus, since the war surges up to the vessels;
And since the wall is gone, and the trench that was gaping beyond it;
—All, with such great toil, that the Danai wrought, and relied on,
As an assured defence to the army itself and the galleys;—
Much do I fear that Zeus has decreed, that the sons of Achaia,
Far from their Argive homes, lose existence and honor together.
Well, did I note, when the God assisted the Danaan armies!
Well, do I note, as now, when he glorifies, e'en to the heavens,
Troy's presuming sons; and shackles our might and our valor.
List, then, to what I advise! Let us all be alert to perform it!
Those of the ships that lie most near to the edge of the shingle,
Them let us drag to the water, and launch them at once on the deep sea!
Keeping them close at hand, safe moor'd by the shore, until sunset
Leads on the sacred night: and a transient respite from battle,
And from Troy's attack:—then perchance we may handle the whole fleet.
It were no matter of shame to escape by the night from destruction.
Better to fly, and live, than remain, and be wretchedly slaughter'd!"

Then, with a scowling look, spake the much-devising Odysseus.

"Why, what a word of shame has escaped from thy teeth, O Atrides!

Would that thy reckless sway were the bane of some army of dastards,
Rather than rule o'er us!—Even us, who are cursed with, by great Zeus,
From our earliest youth, till old age closes upon us,
Constant war and strife; till each lies low in the contest!—
Dar'st thou thus to advise that we fly from the broad-streeted city,
Troy,—for which such ills we already have faced and encounter'd?—
Speak it with bated breath!—lest one of the sons of Achaia
Hear a suggestion base, which none should have ventured to utter;
None, who possesses a heart, and a dauntless soul in his bosom;
None, who is rank'd in the host as a sceptred king; and is follow'd
By such a muster of people as *thou* rulest over in Argos!
I, on my part, dissent altogether from that thou proposest:
Thou, who, even now, whilst battle is roaring around us,
Biddest us launch our ships!—We should but encourage the Trojans;
Strengthen their hands for fight, which already are heavy upon us!
As for ourselves, such an act were perdition!—The sons of Achaia
Would not resist in the fight, when they saw that the galleys were launching;
But would be panic-stricken, and flee in despair from the combat.
So, would thy prudent advice be perdition! O Leader of nations[a]!"

Then, in reply, thus answer'd the King of men—Agamemnon.

"Deeply I feel, O Odysseus, thy words, with the lash of invective,
Cut to my inmost soul! Yet I would not, unwillingly, drive you
Into the hollow ships, or put force on the sons of Achaia.
And if another man can improve on my scheme, let him say so;—
Let him be young or old!—As for me, I am ready to hear him."

Then, to his brother-kings, spake the valorous chief Diomèdes.

"Here is a man at hand! Ye have not far to wander, to find one;
If ye are ready to listen,—and none of you deem it a scandal,
Noting the words of myself, who am youngest by birth in the Council.

[a] There seems to be the excess of polite sarcasm in the conclusion of this speech.

For, I am proud to be known as the son of a valorous father;
Tydeus: Theban soil in a tumulus covers the hero!
For of the old Portheus three sons were the famous descendants;
—Pleuron gave them a home, and the rough Calydonian highlands.—
Agrius, eldest born; then Melas; the youngest was Œneus;
Even my father's father: and he was the bravest among them.
He in his own land rested: my father departed for Argos,
And there abode, exiled by Zeus and the other Immortals.
There did he marry the child of Adrastus; and dwelt in a new home,
Blest with plenteous wealth: for the rich fat acres around him
Glow'd with golden wheat, and the heavy-hung rows of the vineyards:
Many his flocks of sheep; and in battle the sons of Achaia
Trembled beneath his spear. I am telling a tale that you all know!
Or that you ought to know! You have therefore no right to reject me,
Proffering good advice, as a base-born dastardly person.
Let us, I say, though wounded, go out, as we are, to the battle:
But let us keep on the verge of the fray, out of reach of the missiles;
Lest, with our present wounds, fresh wounds be inflicted upon us.
Let us encourage the host, and arouse old spirit within them:
Though they falter in mind, and are shrinking awhile from the combat."

Thus did the warrior speak:—and they steadfastly heard and obey'd him.
So, they commenced their march; and in front was the King Agamemnon.

Nor was an idle watch maintained by Ennosigaios.
After the wounded kings, did he go in the form of an old man;
Seized on the strong right hand of Atreus' son, Agamemnon;
And, consoling the King, thus he rapidly spake and address'd him.

"Well may it happen, now, that the pitiless heart of Achilleus
Swells in his savage breast, as he looks on the rout of Achaia;
And on her slaughter'd sons. He has lost all sense and discernment!—
So may he perish himself, and be doom'd by the Gods to destruction!—
But, as for thee, the Immortals are not as yet minded to hate thee.

And thou yet mayst see the high leaders and chiefs of the Trojans,
Urging their dusty flight o'er the breadth of the plain, and escaping
Back to their city's walls, from the tents and the poops of the galleys."

Speaking, he enter'd the field, and shouted aloud for the combat.
Loud as thousands nine, when marshall'd in arms, or ten thousand,
Shout for the coming strife, when expecting the struggle of Arès!
Such, not less, was the sound which the wide-ruling King Enosicthon
Sent from his ample breast: and he roused, in each son of Achaia,
Martial force and strength; and invincible ardor for battle.

But, from her throne of gold, far away, on the crest of Olympus,
Herè watch'd the field; and, soon, saw a sight to rejoice at;
Saw, restoring the war, 'mid the ranks of the glorious combat,
Her, and her consort's brother: and much did she joy to behold him.
Zeus, on the loftiest peak of the well-water'd summits of Ida,
Next did the Goddess see; but the object was hateful to look on.
Deeply she ponder'd in mind,—the majestic-eyed beautiful Herè,—
How to encompass the senses of Zeus, of the Ægis-wielder.
This, after pondering much, seem'd soundest device to the Goddess;
Deck'd in her bravest garb, to ascend to the summit of Ida,
Testing her beauty's strength on the God, hoping thus to allure him
To the embrace of love—and so to bring slumber upon him,
Sealing his piercing eyes, and blinding the Godhead within him.
Straightway the Goddess went to her chamber:—the work of Hephæstus,
E'en of her son beloved:—he had fashion'd the doors to the portals
Fast with secret locks: he alone had been able to force them.
There did she enter in, and she fasten'd the doors of the chamber.
First, with ambrosial dews, did she wash what there was of defilement
Off from her lovely form; and then she anointed with ointment,
E'en with ambrosial oil;—such is offer'd as incense before her.—
And, as it trickled down, from her breast to the brass of the pavement,
Floated o'er earth and sky rich scents of the odorous unction.
So was she all anointed; and then were her tresses resplendent

Dress'd with cunning hand, and divided and carefully braided
On her immortal head; in radiant locks on her forehead.
Then did she draw on a garment of exquisite texture:—Athenè
Wrought it, a masterpiece; with embroidery glowing upon it.
Glitter'd the golden clasps that united it over her bosom.
Then she encircled her waist with a waist-belt heavy with fringes;
And, in her delicate ears, she inserted curious ear-rings,
Each with a triple drop; bright trembled the sparkling jewels.
Then, of a new device, was a coronet[b] placed by the Goddess
High on her haughty brow: and it shone as the sun in his splendor.
And, on her delicate feet, did she fasten the beautiful sandals.
So, when the might of her charms was arm'd with each careful adornment,
Forth from her bower she went: and she call'd to her side Aphrodìte;
Forth from the rest of the Gods; and plausibly spake and address'd her.

"Wilt thou a favor grant, if I care, O my child! to request it?
Or is my suit to be spurn'd, from a feeling of pique?—recollecting,
I am the friend of the Danai; thou the ally of the Trojans?"

Answer'd the Goddess thus, the fair daughter of Zeus, Aphrodìte.

"Herè, daughter of Cronos! resplendent and beautiful Goddess!
Speak what thy mind impels!—My wish shall be only to grant it;
If it be what I can do, or what others have compass'd before me."

Then, in her guile of heart, spake in answer the beautiful Herè.

"Give me that charm of love and affection, with which thou subduest
Gods and mortals alike: both men, and the happy Immortals.
I am about to depart to the verge of the earth; to revisit
Primitive Oceanus, and Tethys, mother of all Gods.
For, I remember, from Rhèa how once they received and sustain'd me
In their distant home; when broad-brow'd Zeus unto Cronos

[b] Or veil.

Fix'd his infernal abode, 'neath earth and the desolate salt sea.
These am I going to visit; in hopes to allay their dissensions.
Long have the ancient pair been in feeling and heart disunited;
Ceasing from love's embraces; such anger has risen between them.
If, with soothing words, I may speak to them both, and persuade them,
Meeting again in love, to be reconciled one to the other,
Honor'd and loved shall I be by the twain henceforth and for all time."

Answer'd again, to the Goddess, the wreather of smiles, Aphrodìte.

"I cannot say thee nay.—If I could, it were wrong to deny thee;
Thee, whom the arms of Zeus hold, close-embracing, beside him."

Thus did the Goddess speak, and she loosed from her bosom the cestus,
Wrought in varied hues; all lovable treasures within it!
Passion; and close affection; and sweetest converse of lovers;
Words soft-whisper'd, too, which baffle the wit of the wisest:
This, into Herè's hands, did she give: and spake and address'd her.

"Here is the gleaming belt:—hide the treasure away in thy bosom!
All thy wishes are there!—Whatsoever it be that thou aim'st at,
I am assured of this, that thou wilt not return disappointed."

Thus did the Goddess speak: smiled majestic-eyed beautiful Herè;
And, with a smile on her lip, hid the cestus away in her bosom.
So, to her heavenly home, went the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodìte:
Herè turn'd in haste, and descending the ridge of Olympus,
Over Pìeria flew, and Emathia's beautiful landscape;
Passing aloft, in her flight, over Thracia's snow-cover'd mountains;
Over the silver-peaks; not printing the snows with her footsteps;
Till she, descended from Athos, down to the brink of the ocean;
And thus arrived, at last, at Lemnos, city of Thoas:
There was the home of Sleep, twin-brother of Death; and the Goddess
Sought him, grasp'd his hand, and, calling by name, she address'd him.

"Sleep! that art Lord over all! over Gods, as thou art over mortals!
If, ever yet, thou'st heeded the words of my mouth, I beseech thee,
Hear with favor now: and my gratitude ever attends thee.
Close me the eyes of Zeus! Seal the lids of those radiant eyeballs;
Even so soon as myself lie in love and in fondness beside him!
Gifts of price do I proffer: a throne, to endure unto all time,
Fashion'd of gold deep-sculptured: my son, the great artist Hephæstus,
It shall be all his work, with a footstool gleaming beneath it;
Form'd to sustain thy feet, when sittest in ease at the banquet."

Then, in reply to the Queen, spake Sleep, soft soother of sorrows.

"Herè! daughter of Cronos, resplendent and beautiful Goddess,
Any one else of the Gods, who endure throughout all generations,
Easily thus could I tame. I can fetter the streams of the waters,
Even of Ocean's wave, prime source and commencement of all things.
But, even I myself do not venture to go to Cronïon;
Nor do I close his eyelids, unless by his wish and commandment.
I have already been taught a far different course, when I acted
Once upon thy suggestion: that day when the son[c] of the Highest
Sail'd from Ilion's shore, after sacking the town of the Trojans.
Then, o'er the mind of Zeus, o'er the mind of the Ægis-wielder,
Soft was I circumfused:—whilst thou plotted evil against him;
Bringing, on Ocean's breast, fierce blasts of the terrible tempest.
So, on the isle of Cos, did thy wiles carry the hero,
Far from the whole of his friends: and Zeus when he woke was indignant,
Hurling the Gods in wrath o'er the floor of his home: and of all Gods
Me did he search for, most; and methinks he had found, and had cast me
Down from the sky to the sea; but Night, taming men and Immortals,
Shelter'd, and kept me in safety; until his anger relented.
Even the God himself honor'd Night, and was loath to aggrieve her.
Now dost thou urge me again to do that which should ne'er be attempted."

[c] Hercules.

Then, thus again to the God, spake majestic-eyed Herè, in answer.

"Why, of events so sad should the smallest be call'd to remembrance?
Dost thou think that Zeus is as bent to give aid to the Trojans
As he was wroth, of old, for his own loved son, for Heràcles?
Do as I wish! In return I, on thee, bestow one of the Graces,
Give her to thee in love, as thy consort—one of the youngest—
Even the lovely Pasithaè: long hast thou hanker'd to have her."

Thus did the Goddess speak:—Sleep promptly and cheerfully answer'd.

"Swear, then, the oath never broken! the oath by the Stygian waters!—
Laying thy right hand, thus, on the fertile earth; and thy left hand
Stretch'd on the glittering seas: so all of the Gods may attest it;
All the infernal Gods, who reside in the region of Cronos.
Swear, that in deed and in truth, thou wilt give to me one of the Graces,
Even the lovely Pasithaè: long have I hanker'd to have her!"

Thus did the God adjure: and the white-arm'd Herè obey'd him:
Sware; as the God had said; and she call'd all the Gods to attest it;
All those Gods who dwell beneath Tartarus, even the Titans.
So, when thus she had sworn, and completed the great adjuration,
Forth did the twain set off, and departed from Lemnos and Imbrus;
Wrapt in a veil of mist, and the way lay easy before them;
Till they arrived at the bottom of Ida, streaming with fountains,
Mother of beasts of chase; and at Lecton quitted the sea-bed,
Treading again dry land; then the deep woods shook to their footsteps.
There, did Sleep stop short, lest Zeus should be wary and see him;
And, to conceal his form, gat him up in a pine, that on Ida
Rose, in a stately cone, through the dense air heavy around it,
Into a purer sky; and there sat screen'd in the branches;
Liken'd in form to a bird, whose shrill cry rings on the mountains;
Chalcis its name with Gods, but known amid men as Cymindis.

Eagerly Herè went to the loftiest summit of Ida,
Gargarus' snow-crown'd peak: Zeus, roller of storms, recognised her;
And, as he saw his spouse, first love came freshly upon him;
Warm, as it once had been, when newly the twain were united,
Wedded in secret marriage, evading the eyes of their parents.
Full in her front did he stand, and he call'd her by name and address'd her.

"What is the urgent cause that has carried thee here from Olympus,
Steeds and car far away, which are wont to attend on thy journey?"

Then, in the guile of her heart, to the God spake the beautiful Herè.

"Here do I stop, on my way to the uttermost parts of creation,
Primitive Oceanus, and Tethys, mother of all Gods;
They who, in times long past, in their palace received and sustain'd me;
These I am going to see, and to heal, if I can, their dissensions:
Long have the ancient pair been in feeling and heart disunited;
Ceasing from love's embrace;—such anger has risen between them.
As for my steeds, they are here, under Ida streaming with fountains,
E'en on a spur of the mount:—they will bear me o'er sea and o'er dry land.
'Tis on account of thee, that I now am come here to Olympus;
Lest, if I tell thee not, thou perchance mayst be wroth, as thou hearest
That I am gone far hence, to the home of the deep-flowing Ocean."

Then, to the Goddess, thus, spake Zeus, great roller of storm-clouds.

"Herè! another time may suffice for so distant a journey!
But let the hour that *is* be devoted to love and enjoyment!
Never before, as now, did love, for a woman or Goddess,
So rush over my soul, and sweep like a torrent upon me.
Not, as now, of yore, did I burn for the spouse of Ixìon;
Mother of Peirithous; who rivall'd Immortals in wisdom:

Not for fair Acrisiòne[d], the nymph of the delicate ankles;
Persèus' mother was she, most notable he above all men:
Not for the beautiful daughter of Phœnix, widely renownèd;
Mother of great Minos, and the godlike chief Rhadamanthus:
Not, in the Theban wall, did I burn thus of yore for Alcmèna;
Not for Semele's self;—for Alcmèna, who bore me Heràcles;
Semelè, mother of great Dionỳsus[e], blessing to mortals:—
Not, with her braided locks, for the regal grace of Demèter;
Not for Leto's form of majestic beauty: nor, fairest,
Fairest of all,—with thyself—have I ever, as now, been enraptured."

Then, in her guile of heart, spake in answer the beautiful Herè.

"Cronides! greatest of Gods! what an ill-devised speech hast thou utter'd!
Were we to yield, as thou say'st, unto love's soft mood and enjoyment,
Here, upon Ida's top; where all that is done can be noted;
How would the matter stand if some one of the Gods, ever-living,
Trespass'd upon our sleep; and, departing, repeated the scandal
To the assembled Gods? Never more could I enter thy dwelling,
Roused up thus from thy couch: 'twere a thing to call vengeance upon me!
But if thy wishes be such, and if love is so powerful with thee,
There is thy nuptial bower: the hand of thy son, of Hephæstus,
Fashion'd the bower, compacted with stout doors bolted upon it.
There let us enter in, and repose; if repose be thy fancy!"

Then, to the Goddess thus, spake Zeus, great roller of storm-clouds.

"Herè! do not fear that a mortal or God will discern us!
None shall use their eyes! I will roll thick vapors around us,
Even a golden cloud! Not the Sun shall be able to pierce it.
Light, with its sharpest rays, shall endeavor in vain to pervade it."

[d] Or Danaè, daughter of Acrisius.

[e] Bacchus.

Thus, as he spake, did the God stretch his arms to his spouse, to embrace her.
Earth, supporting the twain, burst forth, in a sweet renovation:
Lotus, with cups of dew, and the hyacinth-bells, and the crocus,
Sprouted up, soft and sweet, in a flowery carpet beneath them.
Such was the fragrant couch:—and above them a luminous vapor
Hung, like a golden cloud:—whence bright dews settled upon them.

Thus did the Father repose, entranced on the summit of Ida,
Conquer'd by Love and Sleep;—his arms still clasping his consort.
And, with a rapid flight, flew Sleep to the ships of Achaia;
Eager to speak his errand to earth-shaking Ennosigaios;
So, coming near to the God, thus he rapidly spake and address'd him.

"Give thine heartiest aid to the Danaan army, Poseidon!
Give them the glory in fight! For short is the time that avails thee,
Until Zeus shall awake:—now a soft trance fetters his eyeballs:
Tamed as he is by love, and the wiles and the beauty of Herè."

Such were the words of Sleep; and departed to men; having roused up
Ocean's God to give yet mightier aid to the Argives.
Whom, in their foremost ranks, thus loudly he cheer'd to the battle.

"Argives! can it be so, that the field is relinquish'd to Hector?
Must we to Priam's son give the fleet, and the glory of conquest?
Such are in truth his hopes, and the words of his mouth: since Achilleus
Stays in his hollow galleys and nurses the heat of his anger.
Yet, mighty chief as he is, we but little should need his assistance
Were each true to his cause, and strove to give aid to his comrades.
List then to what I advise, and be ready at once to perform it!
Choose ye the strongest shields, and the largest ye can in the whole host!
Let us be arm'd with these!—our trusty and radiant helmets
Glittering o'er our heads; our longest spears in our right hands!
Thus, let us take our way! I will head you myself! Even Hector,

Hot as he is for the fight, will not care, I suspect, to abide us.
If any man there be who has vigor for fight, but whose weapons
Suit not his stalwart strength, let him change with a weaklier comrade!"

Thus did the Sea-God speak; and the Argives heard and obey'd him.
And they were marshall'd for fight by the wounded kings: by Tydides,
And by the wary Odysseus, and Atreus' son, Agamemnon:
These inspected the ranks, exchanging weapons when needful.
So, was the strong man arm'd with strong, and the weak with the weak arms.
And when it all was arranged, and the ranks all glitter'd in armor,
Onward they bore to the fight: at their head the Earth-shaker, Poseidon,
March'd; and his strong right hand bore a falchion, bright as the lightning,
Flashing from earth to sky:—pale terror seized his opponents.
Where could the man be found who would venture to stand and resist him?

Troy, on the opposite side, under Hector was marshall'd for battle.
So, into that stern strife, were the armies led by their leaders;
This, on the Argive side, by the dark-hair'd God, by Poseidon;
That, on the side of Troy, by her hero, the valorous Hector.
Circling the Argive tents and the galleys, the waves of the Ocean
Rose, like an azure wall.—And then came the crash of the onset.
Not with so heavy a sound, does the sea-wave break on the shingle,
Driven on some lee-shore by the boisterous blast of the north-wind;
Not with so roaring a sound, does the flame o'er the glades of a mountain
Rise, from the blazing woods, as the trees sink in ashes beneath it;
Not with so dreary a sound, does the wind through the oaks of the woodlands
Moan, as the winter's storm drives in pitiless fury among them;
As, on that mournful day, from the armies of Troy, and Achaia,
Mounted the roar of fight, as the hosts met in slaughter together.

Hector, first in the fray, sent his long lance whizzing at Ajax,
E'en as he turn'd to confront him. The well-aim'd weapon alighted
Just where the crossing belts on his broad breast met, overlapping:

One sustaining his shield; one his broadsword, studded with silver:
Yielding a double defence. Then Hector in fierce indignation
Flew back; wroth at the spear which had parted in vain from his right hand.—
Back to the troop of his friends he withdrew, to escape from the death-stroke:
But, as the Trojan retreated, the great Telamonian Ajax
Heaved up a rugged stone—full many, as props for the galleys,
Lay 'mid contending feet:—one of these he uplifted and hurl'd it,
Striking Hector's breast[f], on the rim of the shield by the gullet:
Whirling along, as a quoit, did the great stone strike; and rebounded.
Then, as a wide-spread oak, when struck by the lightning of great Zeus,
Falls, torn up by the roots, and the smell of the sulphur around it
Rises far and wide; and dismay'd are the breasts of beholders,
Looking, in awe, on the wrack, and the work of the Lord of the lightning;
So, did Hector fall, down-stricken in dust by the great stone.
Flew from his hand his spear; his shield was reverted upon him;
Sounded his shining helm; and his arms clatter'd drearily o'er him.
On, with triumphant cry, in a mass came the sons of Achaia;
Deeming his body theirs: and thickly the storm of the jav'lins
Fell, by the fainting chief:—but no foeman was able to touch him,
Either with distant lance, or in closer encounter: their bravest,
Gallant Polydamas first, and Ænèas, and godlike Agènor,
Lycia's monarch, Sarpedon, and Glaucus, and all of their leaders,
Circled around their chief: their round shields serried before him
Cover'd his senseless form: till the troop of his trusty attendants
Bore him away from fight; and they carefully lifted, and bore him
Off to his snorting steeds; for they stood, far away from the battle,
Safe from the clash of arms, with his car and attendant beside them.
So, still heavily groaning, they carried him off to the city.

When they arrived at the ford of the wide river, whirling in eddies,
Xanthus, sacred stream;—great Zeus was the source of the river;—

[f] He must therefore have just turned round to face the enemy; after entering the Trojan lines.

There, did they lift him down from the car to the herbage; and sprinkled
Water upon his face. And his breath came again; and his eyelids
Open'd: he sat up an instant; ejected the blood from his pale lips;
Then sank backward again, still fainting, on earth;—and a darkness
Clouded his closing eyes:—so stunn'd was he yet by the huge stone.

As for the Argive ranks, when they saw the removal of Hector,
Fiercer they press'd on Troy, and were eager again for the combat.
And, far in front of the ranks, did Ajax, son of Oïleus,
Charging the foe with a bound, transfix with the point of his jav'lin
Satnius, Ænops' offspring: his wood-nymph mother had borne him
Unto the swain Ænops, on the banks of the Satnian river.
Him, with a close-dealt stroke, on his side, did the son of Oïleus
Pierce, and he roll'd in dust. Then above him, in arduous combat,
Savagely, one on the other, rush'd Troy and the sons of Achaia.
Over the fallen chieftain, Polydamas sprang to avenge him;
Panthus' gallant son;—and he struck with his spear Prothoènor[g],
Son of Arèilocus: thro' his shoulder the lance of the Trojan
Drove; and he roll'd in the dust, and clutch'd at the earth in the death-pang.
Over his fallen foe thus Polydamas shouted in triumph.

"Not with uncertain aim, from the arm of an offspring of Panthus;
—From such a strong right arm—does a javelin fly! It is buried,
Always, deep in the flesh of an Argive chief. We have here one,
Who, with my spear for a staff, seems groping his way into Hades!"

Thus did the victor boast. Deep sorrow pervaded the Argives.
But it was deepest felt by the great Telamonian chieftain,
Ajax, leader renown'd:—for the dead man tumbled beside him.
Swift, as the foe drew back, in pursuit flew the weapon of Ajax.
But, with a sidelong spring, did Polydamas, marking the danger,
Shrink from the jav'lin's point: yet the spear hit a son of Antènor,

[g] One of the five commanders of the Bœotians.

Even Archelochus' self; for the Gods plotted evil against him[h].
Him did the weapon hit, on the place where the neck and the back-bone
Join; and it severed the joint, and cut, right asunder, the tendons;
So, that the sever'd head, and the blood-stain'd lips, and the nostrils,
Roll'd in the dust, ere the knees of the dead man yielded beneath him[i].
Loud to Polydamas, thus, from afar, came the triumph of Ajax.

"Ponder it, deeply, Polydamas! Answer me truly, and tell me!
Is not the youth, at my feet, an equivalent for Prothoènor?
Even a worthy return?—Not a dastard, nor gotten of dastards!—
Brother's child[k], I suspect, of Antènor, tamer of war-steeds;
Possibly, even his son!—I discern a strong family-likeness!"

Well did he know, who he was! Grief seized on the minds of the Trojans.
Acamas[l], then, with his spear, as he guarded the corpse of his brother,
Pierced the Bœotian chief, stout Promachus; dragging the carcass.
Over his fallen foe thus shouted in triumph the victor.

"Argives! proud as ye are, never weary or sated of boasting,
Deem not alone, upon us, will the toil and the loss of the conflict
Fall! Ye, too, shall die, like to *this* man slaughter'd before us.
Promachus here lies dead!—Mark! how sound is the sleep of the hero,
Quieted thus by my spear!—He has died, lest my brother should languish
Long for a seemly revenge! 'Tis a chance which a man may be proud of,
Dying, to leave a relation so well to avenge him in battle."

[h] Because it was a chance-stroke. The spear being aimed, not at him, but at Polydamas.

[i] Nothing is said as to Archelochus being retreating. The spear, in order to inflict such a wound, must therefore have been diverted, and have glanced sideways: the blade might thus have a cutting action like a scythe.

[k] The word in the Greek may mean either brother, or brother's child (see Donnegan); but it apparently ought to receive the latter interpretation, considering the age of Antènor, and the context. It has hitherto been translated "brother."

[l] Son of Antènor.

Thus did the Trojan boast; and the Argives groan'd as they heard him:
Most did Peneleus feel all the hot wrath rising within him.
Acamas, fiercely he charged;—but the foe would not stand for the onset
Of the Bœotian Prince;—yet Ilioneus sank to the jav'lin;
Son of Phorbas, the rich, of the plentiful herds: 'mid the Trojans
Hermès loved him most, and gave to him wealth in abundance:
And, unto him, did his wife bear Ilionus, only-begotten.
Him, underneath his eye, did the weapon strike; and the spear-point,
Forcing the orb from the socket, and holding its course through the eyeball,
Traversed the nape of the neck: so he sank to the earth, and extended,
Widely, his quivering hands: till Peneleus, baring his falchion,
Smote the extended neck: to the earth flew at once from his shoulders
Helmet and bleeding head: even yet did the length of the jav'lin
Stand, transfixing the eye; till the spear, with the head, as a poppy,
Proudly the victor shook; and thus, scornfully, scouted the Trojans.

"Tell it, ye men of Troy! to Ilioneus' desolate parents;
Father and mother dear!—Let them wail in the walls of their palace!—
Wail, as the widow'd wife of the issue of great Alegènor,
Even of Promachus slain, will lament for her dead; when the galleys
Sail from the Troad home, without *him* 'mid the youths of Achaia!"

Thus the Bœotian chief. Pale terror affrighted his hearers;
All panic-stricken they fled; each eager to scape from destruction.

Tell me, ye Muses! now, ye who dwell in the homes of Olympus!
Which, of Achaia's sons, first tore the red spoils from a foeman,—
Tore, when the tide of fight was reverted by Ennosigaios?

Hyrtius, first was slain by the great Telamonian Ajax;
Gurtias' son;—and the chief of the valorous Mysian levies.
Antilochus slew Phalces, and Mermerus next, in the combat.

Merion vanquish'd Hippotion first, then the valorous Morys[m].
Prothoön perish'd by Teucer, and then fell the strong Periphètes.
Atreus' son[n] in the fray, Hyperènor, shepherd of people,
Wounded deep in the flank; and the spear thro' the midst of his entrails
Tore its blood-stain'd course; and the wide-gaping wound gave a passage
For the reluctant soul; and night overshadow'd his eyeballs.
But none slew such numbers as Ajax, son of Oïleus:
For, not a man in the host was his equal to follow the vanquish'd,
Pressing on broken troops, when Zeus sends panic among them.

[m] See note to Il. xiii, v. 722.

[n] Menelaus. See Il. xvii, v. 24.

BOOK THE FIFTEENTH.

Shows how Zeus was wroth with his spouse and the mighty Poseidon.

THUS, when the broken foe, having traversed the stakes and the trenches,
Driven in headlong flight—though many went down in the death-strife,
Smitten by Danaan hands—came again to the cars and the war-steeds,
There, all pale with fear, did they rally awhile.—And, on Ida,
Zeus waken'd up from sleep; from the golden-thron'd Herè beside him.
Starting erect, he perceived the two armies, of Troy and Achaia:
That, in broken flight; while, pressing the rear of the flying,
Rush'd on the Argive ranks, and amid them the kingly Poseidon:
Hector, stretch'd on the plain, and around him his grieving attendants,
Watching their gasping chieftain: his heart beat faint, and the dark blood
Flow'd from his mouth; for the blow came from no puny son of Achaia.
Him, with compassion, regarded the Father of men and Immortals.
Turning his lowering brows upon Herè, he fiercely address'd her.

"'Tis by thine evil craft, and thy treachery, mischievous Herè!
Hector is stay'd from fight, and his people are scatter'd around him.
Now am I half inclined that the fruit of thy base machinations
First should be borne by thyself; descending in scourging upon thee!
Hast thou forgotten the day thou wert hung up aloft; with the anvils
Dangling from those feet; those hands bound fetter'd above thee,
Fast in the golden links [a];—suspended in air and in dark clouds;
Hanging, and pitied by all of the Gods on the range of Olympus?
Yet their united force was in vain:—whomsoever I seized on,

[a] This seems to be the earliest description of the rack, in its simplest form.

Him did I hurl far away from the threshold of heaven, and fling him
Down, in evil case, to the region of earth : yet the anguish
Could not thus be appeased, which I felt for the godlike Heracles,
Driven by thy device, with the help of the storms and the north-wind,
Over the barren Deep, 'till, vex'd by thine evil contrivance,
E'en to the shores of Cos was he driven, at last, by the tempests.
Thence did I lead him forth ; and I brought him again unto Argos,
Famous for high-fed steeds—'though much had he borne in his travels.
Let me remind thee of this ; let the thought put a stop to thy fondlings !
Look to it well ! and perceive the device will not always avail thee,
Even the cheat of love ; brought, now, from the Gods to seduce me !"

Thus did he speak ;—and a thrill shook large-eyed beautiful Herè :
Thus unto Zeus did she speak, and in wingëd words she address'd him.

" Witness it, earth beneath ! thou sky ! wide-expanded above us ;
And ye reluctant streams of the Stygian waters !—the greatest,
And most dreadful oath, that is known to the blessèd Immortals—
Thine own sacred head ! and—an oath that I never could swear by
But with a perfect faith—our own first virgin-embraces !
Not thro' suggestion of mine doth the earth-shaking ruler Poseidon
Trouble the hosts of Troy, and their chieftain ; and succor the Argives.
Only his own indignation has urged and enforced him to act so :
Seeing them, slain at the galleys, he grieves for the sons of Achaia.
Even I myself, if I ventured to speak, would persuade him
Calmly to follow where thou, dark Lord of the thunder ! invitest."

Thus did the Goddess speak : and the Father of men and Immortals
Smiled, as he heard her protest ; and in wingëd words he address'd her.

" If it be really thus, as thou sayest, O beautiful Herè !
If, 'mid the deathless Gods, thou thinkest in unison with me,
Then—let his own proud will be opposed as it may—shall Poseidon
Speedily change his tone, and concede what we both are resolved on.

So, if thy words are sooth, and thou meanest the thing that thou speakest,
Go, to the tribes of the Gods! and thence send hither, in all haste,
Iris, swift of wing; and the silvery archer Apollo.
So, that the one may go to the brass-mail'd host of Achaia;
And may a message bear, from my mouth, to the kingly Poseidon;
Bidding him cease from war, and depart to his own habitation.
And, unto Hector's side, I may send away Phœbus Apollo;
That he may breathe in his breast fresh vigor for fight, and may banish
Sense of the racking pains which are tearing his soul.—The Achaians[b]
He shall again repulse, put to flight, and disgracefully rout them.
They, overtaken in flight, shall be slain by the sides of the deep-bank'd
Galleys of Peleus' son.—He will send to the rescue Patroclus;
Even his own dear friend: that friend will be slaughter'd by Hector
Under the walls of Troy, after many have perish'd before him,
Vanquish'd by him in fight: and among them my offspring Sarpedon.
Then, in revenge for Patroclus, shall Hector be slain by Achilleus.
And, from this point of the war, I for ever revert from the galleys,
Battle's refluent tide; till the day when the sons of Achaia
Master the Trojan wall, by the counsels of Pallas Athenè.
Nor shall my wrath be appeased, nor shall one of the race of Immortals
Succor the Danaan hosts, till the day when the vows of Achilleus,
Even of Peleus' son, shall be blest with the full consummation;
All that I promised at first,—with the nod of my head I affirm'd it,—
On that day when my knees in prayer were encircled by Thetis,
Praying renown for her son; for Achilleus, waster of cities."

Thus did the Father speak; and the white-arm'd Herè obey'd him.
From the Idæan mount, she again sought the range of Olympus.
E'en as the mind of a man who is conversant largely with travel,
Passes, in swift review, over lands he has track'd; and recalls them:
Now is he here, now there; as widely his memory ranges:
Even so instant and fast through the sky flew the beautiful Herè:

[b] Here follows a declaration of the whole of the divine scheme; as promised to Herè in Il. i, v. 548.

Until she came to the height of Olympus; and found the Immortals
Thronging the hall of Zeus: and they one and all, as she enter'd,
Started erect from their seats, to receive her; and proffer'd their goblets.
Yet were they all pass'd by: only Themis, daintily featured,
Found her cup accepted—for first she came running to meet her—
As with wingëd accents she call'd her by name and address'd her.

"Why do we see thee here; and why with so gloomy an aspect?
Surely thy spouse is the cause!—He seems to have fearfully scared thee!"

Spake, in reply unto Themis, the white-arm'd heavenly Herè.

"Question me not, thus; Themis!—thou knowest thyself of my consort,
How overweening he is; how unyielding the mind in his broad breast.
Take then thy place at the board of the Gods, and preside at the banquet!
Thou, in time, shalt hear, and so will all the Immortals,
Hear of the evil deeds now imagined by Zeus.—His proceedings,
Both unto men and to Gods, will, I think, give a scant satisfaction.
Some one, perchance, may grieve who now feasts gaily among you."

With these words in her mouth, on her throne sat the beautiful Herè:
And through the mansion of Zeus, did the Deities, deeply indignant,
Listen. A proud stern smile curl'd her lips: but it smooth'd not the forehead
Over her dark-black brows; as, wrathfully, thus she continued.

"We are but senseless fools, when we quarrel with Zeus; and are anxious,
Testing him close at hand, to put bounds to his might; and constrain him
Either by words or force! He abides by himself; and regardless,
Is not a whit provoked: for he says that in might and in prowess,
Far beyond all compare, he is first of the Gods, the Immortals.
Therefore, whatever of ill comes from him, bear, with due resignation!
And, even now, I suspect a disaster has happen'd to Arès.
For in the battle has fallen Ascalaphus, dearest of all men

Unto his sire, if in sooth, as they say, he was son of the War-God."

Thus did she speak. Arès, his hands, down-driven in anguish,
Smote on his stalwart thighs: and he burst into loud lamentation.

"Do not account it a sin, O ye Gods, who inhabit Olympus!
If, to avenge my son, I descend to the ships of Achaia!
Though I be doom'd, for the act, to be stretch'd there, blasted with lightning,
Stricken to earth by Zeus, 'mid the dust, and the carnage, and corpses."

Thus did the War-God speak: and he gave unto Fear, unto Terror
Orders to harness his steeds; and he buckled his armor about him.
And, then and there, had wrath more deep, more of stern indignation,
Fallen, from Zeus incensed, upon all of the race of Immortals:
Had not Athenè's self,—for she fear'd for the Deities round her,—
Over the threshold sprung; starting up from the throne underneath her:
Snatching his helm from his head, and his shield from the breadth of his shoulders;
And from his strong right hand constraining the spear:—and she placed it
Upright, gleaming apart: and she sternly address'd, and rebuked him.

"Thou'rt insane of mind!—Art suddenly wanting in hearing?
Or, if thine ears yet hear, have sense and modesty left thee?
Heard'st thou not what words e'en now have been utter'd by Herè;
Who, from Olympian Zeus, e'en now is come hither among us?
Is it thy wish to endure, in thy person, his stern retribution;
And, sore anger'd at heart, perforce to return to Olympus,
Cause of woe to thyself and to all of us Deities round thee?
For, in his wrath, will Zeus leave the armies of Troy and Achaia
Unto their own devices, and trouble the race of Olympus.
Seizing us all in turn, confounding the guilty and guiltless.
Let me advise thee, therefore, be quit of thy wrath for thine offspring.
Many a better man, both in courage and strength, than thy son was,
Has died, and will die. It, in sooth, were a toilsome achievement,

Safely to guard thro' the battle the whole generation of mortals."

Thus did the Goddess speak, and reseated impetuous Arès.
And, outside of the mansion, did Herè call to Apollo,
And to the messenger Iris, who ministers unto Immortals;
These did the Goddess call; and with wingëd accents address'd them.

"Zeus commands you both, with speediest haste, unto Ida!
And, when you there arrive, and stand in his presence and face him,
See that you there observe whatever he orders; and do it!"

Thus did she speak to the twain: then re-enter'd the beautiful Herè,
And sat her down on her throne: and the two floated willingly onward
Unto the mother of beasts, even Ida, streaming with fountains.
There, on the topmost peak, upon Gargarus, found they reposing
Far-sighted, mighty, Cronīon; enwreath'd with the vapor of incense.
So, in the presence of Zeus, of the Deity rolling the storm-cloud,
Stood the expectant twain: and he saw, and was soothed as he saw them,
Pleased, that the words of his spouse, had received such a speedy observance.
Iris, first he address'd; and, with wingëd words, he commanded.

"Iris! swift of wing! speed hence to the kingly Poseidon!
Say to him, all that I tell thee, and be not a negligent herald.
Tell him, to cease from war, and to meddle no more with the battle;
But to revisit the Gods, or retreat back again to the Ocean.
If he rejects my words, and refuses to yield and obey them,
Then bid him ponder this, in his heart, in the depth of his broad breast!
Whether, robust as he is, he would dare to abide for my onset,
Should I descend to assail him?—I trow I am stronger than he is;
Stronger by far, and his better as elder in birth; though he ventures
Thus to presume as the equal of *me*, who am dreaded by all Gods."

Thus did the Father speak; and the wind-wing'd Goddess obey'd him.
Down she, at once, descended to Troy from the summit of Ida.

As, from a passing cloud, when a shower of snow, or a hail-storm,
Falls, 'mid a sky serene, 'neath the nipping blast of the north-wind;
Not less swift in her haste to the earth flew the messenger, Iris;
Stood by the side of the monarch, and spake unto Ennosigaios.

"I have a word for thine ear; thou dark-hair'd girder-of-all-lands!
Brought, by myself, from Zeus, from the mouth of the Ægis-wielder,
Bidding thee cease from war, and to meddle no more with the battle;
But to revisit the Gods, or retreat back again to the Ocean.
If thou rejectest his words, and refusest to yield and obey them,
Then, does he threaten, in person, to enter the battle against thee,
Coming himself on earth:—but he earnestly warns, and dissuades thee,
From such unequal strife: for he says he is stronger than thou art,
Stronger by far; and thy better, as elder in birth;—though thou darest
Thus to presume as the equal of him who is dreaded by all Gods."

Then, in his grievous wrath, spake the glorious Ennosigaios.

"Gods! He perchance is strong. Yet he sends me an arrogant message:
Seeking to put constraint upon me who am worthy as he is.
Three of us sprung from Rhèa. She bare us, alike, unto Cronos:
Zeus, and myself; and the third was Hades, monarch of shadows.
All things were parted in thirds: each took his own share of preferment;
Lots decided the shares: and I drew the hoary-maned ocean,
For my eternal home: and the nether region was Hades'!
Zeus, for his lot, took sky; the wide region of clouds and of æther:
Earth is yet common to all; and the long steep range of Olympus.
So am I not disposed to submit unto Zeus!—Let him tarry,
Strong as he is, in peace, and abide in his equal allotment!
But let him threaten not *me* with a menace of force, as a dastard;
Better, by far, for the God, if he rate, with his violent accents,
His own sons and daughters; the Gods of his recent begetting!
They, when their Father raves, are bound to attend and obey him."

Thus, then, replied to Poseidon the wind-footed messenger, Iris.

"Must it be even thus? thou dark-hair'd girder-of-all-lands!
Must I return unto Zeus, so stern, so hardy an answer?
Or wilt thou somewhat repent?—Great minds are disposed to repentance.[c]—
Elder brothers, thou know'st, are attended by guardian Furies!"

Spake, in reply to the Goddess, the great Earth-shaker, Poseidon.

"True is it, as thou say'st: well timed are the words thou speakest!
It is a fortunate thing, when a messenger knows what is seemly.
But my whole heart and mind are swollen with deep indignation
That, though his equal in lot, and as loftily destined as he is,
I should be forced to submit, and to yield to his haughty dictation:
Yet, all wroth as I am, I for once give way, and respect him.
Yet will I say but this, and treasure the threat in my anger:—
If, in despite of me, in despite of the spoiler Athenè,
Herè, Hermès too, and despite of the princely Hephæstus,
He should resolve to preserve the high city of Troy, and to save it
From impending sack, and to baffle the sons of Achaia,—
Then let him know that a strife, unappeasable, rises between us!"

Thus did Poseidon speak, and deserted the host of Achaia,
Plunging beneath his waves:—its chiefs felt the loss of the Sea-God.
Then did the Cloud-compeller thus speak unto Phœbus Apollo.

"Phœbus! beloved son! seek Hector, the brazen-crested.
Even now, I perceive that the Earth-girder, Ennosigaios,
Flies to the sacred main, and declines to await for the onset
Of my awaken'd wrath.—Such strife has been tested by others;
E'en the infernal Gods, who abide in the region of Cronos.—
And it is better, by far, both for him and for me, that the contest
Thus has come to nought; and, though anger'd, he shuns to encounter

[c] Compare "The weak alone repent"—LORD BYRON, "Corsair."

These unconquer'd hands.—Such a strife were not easily ended.
Therefore, do thou, in thy hands, take the orb of the dazzling[d] Ægis;
Take it, and shake it aloft; and affrighten the hosts of Achaia!
Be it thy special care to give aid to the warrior Hector.
Tend him! Awaken his strength for the fight! Till the sons of Achaia
Fly to the broad Hellespont, and are slain by the sides of the galleys.
Then will I, even myself, find a scheme, and a means to perform it;
Which may preserve their hosts, and afford them a breathing from danger."

Thus did the Father speak; all willingly heard him Apollo.
Down, from the summit of Ida, he swept to the earth; as a goshawk,
Swiftest of birds of prey, well known 'mid the flights of the pigeons.
There, no more outstretch'd, did he find the brave issue of Priam,
Seated, and able to see and to recognise comrades around him,
With his recover'd senses:—the panting, and thick perspiration,
Both had ceased; for his strength was restored by the Ægis-wielder.
Standing near to the chief, thus spake the far-darter, Apollo.

"Hector, Priam's son, why here all away from thy comrades,
And in such evil plight? Some disaster has, surely, beset thee!"

Then, but with feeble strength, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"Which—most welcome of all—of the Gods deigns now to accost me?—
Hast thou heard not the story—in front of the fleet of Achaia,
While I was slaying his friends, how the arm of the terrible Ajax
Struck me, in front, with a stone, and disabled me thus for the combat?
I have, myself, supposed that to-day I was bound unto Hades;
Unto the realm of shades:—so nearly my spirit was fleeting."

Spake, in reply to the chieftain, the far-darting regal Apollo.

"Courage!—Cronion sends to the earth, from the summit of Ida,

[d] "Fringed"—but the primary idea seems to be that of rapidity of motion.

Him of the golden sword, as a prompt and a ready defender,
Phœbus Apollo's self.—I have ever been found the protector
Both of Troy and thee :—and now I am here to assist thee.
Give then the word of command to the host; bid the drivers of war-cars
Drive to the hollow ships, and urge on the horses at full speed.
I will be found in the van, and will lay a path open before you,
Wide and smooth for the cars; and discomfort the hosts of Achaia."

Thus did he speak; and breath'd new strength in the shepherd-of-people.
As when a pamper'd steed, high fed in luxurious stables,
Breaks from the halter, loose, and careers o'er the flat of the meadows,
Seeking his wonted haunts, and the fresh cool bath in the river,
Proud of his strength ;—and he tosses his head ;—and the mane from his shoulders
Floats on the gale ;—and he moves, in his vigor and beauty exulting,
Proudly, with prancing steps, to his haunts, and the herd of the females;
So, new strengthen'd in limb, and with fresh-born vigor, did Hector
Urge on the charioteers ;—for the voice of the God was around him.
And, as the savage dogs, and the rustic bands of the hunters,
Harass a great wild-boar, or an antler'd stag of the mountains,
Till inaccessible rocks and the shadowy depths of the thicket
Shelter the wearied prey, and their efforts are vain to dislodge it;
When, of a sudden, the noise of the chace brings a shaggy-maned lion
Out on the hunters' path, and their ardor is check'd in an instant;
So, on the rear of Troy, did the Danai press, in confusion;
Smiting, with great broadswords, and partisans wielded in both hands.
But, 'mid the hostile ranks, when Hector appear'd, at his aspect
All their hearts were chill'd, and in dust sank their high aspirations.

Thoas, Andræmon's son, first saw him, and spake to his comrades.
Thoas, Ætolia's chief; well-skill'd in the use of the jav'lin,
Mighty in standing fight; and few of the sons of Achaia
Rivall'd him in debate, when the young men spake in the Council:
Thus, concern'd for the host, did he speak to the ranks, and address them.

"Gods! What a marvellous wonder is this which my eyes are beholding!
Hector has risen again!—He has baffled the fates; and evaded
Death!—Not a man in the ranks, but deem'd he was slain and forgotten;
Fell'd by the thundering arm of the great Telamonian Ajax.
But, some one of the Gods has surely redeem'd and preserved him:
Him who, alas! has slain so many brave sons of Achaia;
And, or I much mistake, will slay many more; for his projects,
First as he is of the foe, are encouraged by Zeus, by the Storm-God.
Then let us all be alert, and act as I now will advise you:
Back to the hollow ships let us hasten the people, and save them:
And, let us of the host who profess to be foremost and bravest
Here make a stand; and try, if we may not be able to bear him
Back, at the point of the spear.—All hot as he is for the combat,
Scarcely himself would dare to break into the host of Achaia."

Thus did the warrior speak—and his comrades readily heard him.
Then round Crete's proud king, and round the two mighty Ajaces,
Merion, Teucer too, and Meges, rival of Arès,
Closed up the ranks for fight, collecting the leaders among them,
Right in the path of Troy, and of Hector's self; and behind them,
Back to the hollow ships, went the bulk of the host of Achaia.
Troy charged first in a mass, and Hector, the first of the Trojans,
Came on, loftily striding:—in front of him, Phœbus Apollo
Moved, enshrouded in cloud to his shoulders, and bearing the Ægis:
Dreadfully bright it shone, with its dazzling fringe; for Hephæstus
Fashion'd the blazing buckler, to terrify men, and bestow'd it
Thus, as a gift, on Zeus: with it Phœbus headed the people.
Densely the Argive ranks met the shock of the charge; and the uproar
Rose, upon either side, from the mingling hosts: as the arrows
Leapt from the tough bow-strings, and in whizzing flight the jav'lins
Left their strong right hands.—Some tasted the flesh of a foeman:
Many, between both hosts, unflesh'd and unconscious of bloodshed,
Quiver'd deep in earth, with points disappointed of carnage.
While, then, the Ægis remain'd unshaken by Phœbus Apollo,

Fell on each army the storm of the darts, and slain were the people:
But, on the Danaan ranks, when he levell'd his gaze; and, the Ægis,
Shook in the face of the host, and fearfully shouted against them
Then, was their courage quell'd, their hearts sank low in their broad breasts.
As, in the gloom of eve, two wild beasts, stealthily moving,
Rush, with a sudden burst, on the well-stored pens of the sheepfold,
On to the lowing herd, at a time when the shepherd is absent;
So, the Achaian host turn'd to terrified flight: for Apollo
Struck them with panic fear, giving glory to Troy and to Hector.
Then did the chiefs of Troy their opponents slay in the combat.
Hector slew Stichius, and the valorous Arcesilaus:
One was a leader stout of Bœotia's mailèd contingent;
One was the trusted friend of the high-soul'd leader Menestheus.
Medon and Iasus died by the arm of the mighty Ænèas:
Medon, one of the twain, was the base-born son of Oïleus;
Chief of godlike fame, and of kin to Oïlean Ajax:
Yet did he dwell far away from his native land, having slaughter'd
One of his step-dame's blood, Eriopis, the spouse of Oïleus;
Phylacè therefore he sought:—and his comrade in death was a leader
Of the Athenian ranks, and known as the issue of Sphèlus.
Then was Mecisteus slain, by Polydamas; and by Polites
Echius fell in the vanward, and Clonius died by Agenor.
Paris smote Deiochus, with his spear, at the base of his shoulder,
Just as he turn'd for flight: and the point drove utterly through him.

While they were spoiling the slain of their armor, the sons of Achaia,
Right thro' the yawning trench, and the stakes deep-planted within it,
Pass'd, in broken flight; and retreated again to the rampart.
And, at the height of his voice, called Hector aloud to the Trojans,
Urging them on to the fleet, forbidding the spoil of the vanquish'd;
"For, whosoever he be, whom I find skulking off from the galleys,
Instant doom is his;—no crowds of affectionate kinsfolk,
Bearing his corpse to the pile, shall award to him funeral honors:

Dogs shall tear his limbs, and rend him in sight of the ramparts."

Thus did the warrior speak; and then, with a shout to the Trojans,
Lash'd on his steeds to the war;—and his followers, crowding around him,
Took up their leader's shout; and at once, with a terrible war-cry,
Drove on the harness'd steeds;—and, in front of them, Phœbus Apollo,
Planting his foot by the trench, at the edge of the mighty escarpment,
Thrust down the crumbling bank; and bridged the fosse solidly over;
E'en with a broad long road:—as long as the flight of a jav'lin,
Thrown from a stalwart arm, as a proof of the strength of the thrower.—
Over the levell'd road throng'd foemen in troops; and Apollo
March'd, with Ægis in front: and he levell'd the wall of Achaia,
Easily; just as a child thrusts down, on the sand of the sea-shore,
What it, perchance, has built on the sand for its idle amusement;
And, when built, as soon, foot and hand, sets to work, and destroys it.
With like ease, didst thou, bright Phœbus! the work of the Argives
Level at once in the dust, and pour dread panic among them.

They, by the galleys' sides, perforce, stood, rallied an instant;
Each exhorting his fellows; and then, to each God in the heavens,
Raised their trembling hands; and called upon all to protect them.
None, of Achaia's sons, more fervently pray'd than did Nestor;
Ever alert for the host, his hands outstretch'd to the broad skies.

"O Father Zeus, if ever in Argos, gleaming with corn-fields,
One of the host has burnt fat oxen or sheep on thy altars,
Praying a safe return, and his vows were heard and accepted;
Think of them now, O Olympian!—Save us from fate, and defend us!
Let not the sons of Troy make an end of the host of Achaia."

Thus did the elder pray: Zeus thunder'd, loudly, in answer;
Hearing the deep-breath'd vows of the reverend offspring of Neleus.
Troy's presuming sons, at the voice of the Ægis-wielder,
Press'd on Achaia the more, and redoubled their ardor for combat.

Just as a giant wave, in the midst of a wide-rolling ocean,
Breaks on a galley's side, as the seas rush heavily onward,
Borne by the strength of the wind, as it masses the surges before it;
With such a roaring sound, swept Troy's fierce hosts at the rampart,
Lashing their war-steeds on; till the fight by the sterns of the galleys
Raged; on the side of Troy, with partisans wielded in both hands,
Wielded from their cars; while the Argives, mounting the galleys,
Waged from aloft the encounter, with long pikes, ready around them,
Suited for naval strife, well girded, and headed with metal.

While, in uncertain struggle, the armies of Troy and Achaia
Fought for the leaguer'd wall, and the war was afar from the galleys;
There, in the tent of Eurypylus, still had abided Patroclus,
Tending his wounded friend: and consoled him with talk; and the anguish
Drew from the burning wound, with medicaments sprinkled upon it.
But, when the hero saw how the armies of Troy on the rampart
Throng'd, and the Danaans scatter'd in terrified clamor before them,
Then did he groan out loud; and his hands, down-driven in anguish,
Smote on his stalwart thigh; and he burst into loud lamentation.

"I am unable, Eurypylus!—great, as at present, thy need is,—
Here to abide any longer; so deadly a struggle around us.
Thee, thine attendant's care may suffice to amuse;—but Achilleus
I must return to in haste; and urge him again to the combat.
Who, if the God be propitious, can tell if I may not persuade him,
Urging his haughty mind?—Right good are the words of a comrade."

E'en as the warrior spake, he was off on his quest: the Achaians
Waited, in serried strength, for the onset of Troy;—yet their efforts
Could not drive their foes, though fewer than they, from the galleys:
Nor could the sons of Troy, by asunder breaking the phalanx,
Force, through the Danaan armies, a path to the tents and the navy.
As when the keel of a galley is straighten'd to rule by the plumb-line,

Used by the skilful hands of a cunning artificer, expert
In all craft of his trade, instructed by Pallas Athenè:
Not less straight, that day, were the lines of assail'd and assailant.
Widely, in front of the galley, did foeman battle with foeman:
Hector reserved his attack for the great Telamonian Ajax.
One proud galley, alone, was the object of both: and the Trojan
Could not dislodge his foe, and lay to the vessel the bright flames;
Nor—for the God gave help—could Ajax drive his assailant.
Then died Clytius'[e] son, under Ajax's weapon, Caletor;
Bearing the flames to the galley;—the spear struck deep in his broad chest;
Thundering he fell; and the torch roll'd, smouldering, far from his right hand.
Hector, with grieving eye, saw his kinsman, mortally wounded,
Roll'd in the blood-stain'd dust; all in front of the stern of the galley:
And, at the height of his voice, roused Lycia's troops, and the Trojans.

"Trojans! Lycians too! and ye Dardans, famous in close-fight!
Do not recede, nor yield one step, in the arduous struggle!
Save, rather, Clytius' son!—Let it never be said, that Achaia
Stripp'd your comrade's arms thus slain at the storm of her galleys!"

Thus did the warrior speak, and darted his weapon at Ajax;
Darted and miss'd his mark: yet on Lycophon, offspring of Mastor,
—Ajax's valued attendant, the place of his birth was Cythèra,
Whence, having slaughter'd a man, he had fled to the service of Ajax—
Him, as he stood by his Lord, did the eager point of the jav'lin
Strike on the side of his head, by the top of the ear, and he tumbled
Prone from the galley's stern, and his limbs lay slack on the shingle.
Ajax saw, with a shudder; and call'd up his brother beside him.

[e] Clytius; a brother of Priam. Several of the leading Trojans, slain in the assault on the galleys, are first-cousins of Hector.

"Teucer, my friend! our eyes see the death of a trusty attendant,
Even of Mastor's son; whom of yore, as he came from Cythèra,
Both of us hail'd as a parent, and honor'd as such in the palace.
Hector has slaughter'd the chief.—Where now are thy bow and thine arrows;
Arrows wing'd with fate: bright present of Phœbus Apollo?"

Thus did he speak; and his brother, assenting, hastily near him
Ran, with his fateful bow; bent backward as yet[f]; and the quiver
Stored with shafts.—Right soon flew an arrow, on Troy, from the tight string;
Piercing a chief of name; even Clitus, son of Pisènor;
Comrade, and charioteer of Polydamas, offspring of Panthus:
As, with the reins in hand, he was full of the care of the war-steeds,
Guiding their fiery course, where the press of the battle was deepest,
Deeming to merit much both of Troy and of Hector—upon him
Fate fell, all unarrested by those who had readily turn'd it:
For, on the nape of his neck, came the whizzing arrow behind him:
Headlong he roll'd in dust. As he tumbled, the terrified war-steeds
Rattled the lighten'd car: but Polydamas, marking the danger,
Rush'd up in front of the steeds, and was first to arrest and secure them:
And he committed both to Astynous, charging him straitly—
He was thy son, Protiàon!—to keep them at hand, and to watch for
Him, their Lord, in the fight;—then mingled again in the vanguard.

Teucer, another shaft was pointing again upon Hector,
Marking his gleaming helm:—and that day, by the ships of Achaia,
Troy's best chief had died, if the shaft of the archer had struck him:
But the perceptive mind of Zeus, who, for ever regardful,
Watch'd over Hector's life, disappointed the glory of Teucer;
Breaking his tough bow-string, well twisted of thongs; as his right hand
Drew up the shaft to the head:—far astray flew the point of the arrow
Headed with burnish'd brass, and the bow, from the grasp of the archer,

[f] That is, unstrung.

Tumbled: he shudder'd with awe; and fearfully spake to his brother.

"There is a power, on high, who is marshall'd in battle against us:
Bringing our schemes to nought; and has stricken my bow from my right hand;
Breaking the twisted thong I had only this morning selected.
Many an arrow, I thought, would have bounded eagerly from it."

Spake, in reply to his brother, the great Telamonian Ajax.

"Lay then aside thy bow! let the arrows be quiet beside it!
Since, so it is, that the God bears grudge to the hosts of Achaia:
Handle thy long war-spear, let the bright shield gleam on thy shoulders;
And, thus accoutred, meet Troy's host: and encourage thy comrades.
Think upon recent achievements; and fight as of yore; and the foemen,
If they prevail at the last, will not readily master the galleys."

Thus did the warrior speak; and his brother aside put the weapon;
And, on his shoulders broad, set the four-fold orb of his buckler;
Then, on his gallant head, did he fasten the beautiful helmet,
Tufted with horses' hair; and the crest nodded terribly o'er it.
Then took a stalwart lance; right keen was the brass of the spear-point;
And, at his utmost speed, ran in haste to the succor of Ajax.

Hector remark'd, with joy, the disabled weapon of Teucer;
Calling at height of his voice unto Troy and the Lycian armies.

"Trojans! Lycians, too! and ye Dardans, famous in close-fight!
Quit ye like men, O friends! and remember your recent achievements,
Here by the hollow ships!—Mine eyes, this instant, beheld it;
Saw how a leading foe was by Zeus disarm'd of his arrows.
Easily men may discern great Zeus in his dealings among them;
Giving his aid unto these, he accumulates glory upon them;
Bringing their foes unto nought, and refusing them aid or protection.
Thus, this day, does the God humble Argos, and give us assistance.

Then, on the hostile fleet, press ye on in a mass.—If among you
Any should find his fate, by sword-stroke slain, or by arrow,
So let him die!—Such a death, thus met in defence of his own land,
Is not a fate of dishonor. His rescued wife, and his young ones,
Homestead, and home unscathed, will abide; when the sons of Achaia
Back, in their baffled fleet, shall retreat to the land of their fathers."

Thus did he speak; and roused all the courage and strength of his hearers.
While, on the other side, thus Ajax call'd to his comrades.

"Argives! shame on you all. This day will decide if we die here;
Or win safety by driving destruction away from the navy.
Do ye suppose, if the vessels are captured in battle by Hector,
We can secure a retreat, far away to the land of our fathers?
Do not ye hear his voice?—rising high 'mid the roar of the combat—
Urging his soldiers on;—how he raves to set flame to the galleys?
Not to the dance, in sooth, but to fight, is the stern invitation.
And, in the present distress, no advice can be better or sounder
Than, here, hand unto hand, to encounter the foe in a death-gripe.
Better to die at once, or in safety survive, than to linger,
Wearied, and sink, at last, worn out in the arduous struggle,
Close to the sides of the galleys, by foes who are weaker than we are."

Thus, did the hero speak, and aroused each soldier around him:—
Hector slew Stichius:—thy valorous son, Perimedes!—
Chief of the Phocian armies. Laodamas perish'd by Ajax;
Leader was he of the spearmen; Antènor's notable offspring.
Next, in the van, did Polydamas slay the Cyllenian Otus,
Chief of Epeia's sons, and friend of the mighty Phyleides[g].
Meges saw him fall, and rush'd to avenge; but the Trojan,
Stooping, evaded the spear; so it pierced not him: for Apollo
Guarded Panthus' son, nor left him to die in the vanguard:
Yet, upon Crœsmus' bosom, the spear-point lighted and slew him:

[g] Meges.

Thundering he fell to the earth, and the foe tore the arms from his shoulders:
But, as he plunder'd the slain, he was mark'd in the battle by Dolops;
Skill'd in the use of his weapon; the high-born offspring of Lampus[h],
Issue of Laomedon; well train'd in each point of the combat.
He, with levell'd lance, charged full on the shield of Phyleides;
Driving the long spear through: but his cuirass mightily saved him;
That which the warrior bore; from Ephyra, formerly, Phyleus
Brought that jointed mail—from the banks of the river Sellèis,
Given to him as a pledge of friendship and love, by Euphètes,
By it protected in war, to remember his host: and he found it
Of much avail to himself, and it equally saved his descendant.
Then, on the Trojan helm, in return, the redoubtable Meges
Struck, with his sharp broad blade: and it shore off the peak of the helmet;
Cutting the tufted summit away; and the crest, with its horsehair,
Glowing with new-dyed crimson, in dust fell nodding before him.
E'en as the Trojan stood, and contested the fight; and was hoping
Victory yet might be his, to the aid of his foe came Atrides;
Came up, unperceived, sideways in his rear, and transfixed him
Right thro' the shoulder-joint: and the spear-head, hurrying onward,
Stood out, bare at his breast; and he came down stumbling o'er it.
Then the two Argive chiefs, all hot for the mail on his shoulders,
Rush'd to despoil their dead:—but Hector, aloud, to his kinsmen
Shouted, and more than to all to thy valorous son, Hiketaon[i]!
Even the stout Melanippus, a chief who had pastured his oxen
Erst in the far Percòte, while foes kept yet at a distance:
But, when over the seas came the double-oar'd Danaan galleys,
Unto the Trojan town he return'd, and assisted the Trojans;
And he was entertain'd by the King, and received as his offspring.
Hector singled out, and, addressing by name, thus aroused him.

"Can we remain, unmoved, at a sight such as this, Melanippus?
Seeing a kinsman die, is thy bosom untroubled within thee?

[h] Brother of Priam. [i] A brother of Priam.

Dost not see, how the foe throngs round for the armor of Dolops?
On, to a closer fight!—No more let us strive, at a distance,
Thus with the Argive host; but, grappling closer upon them,
Slay them; or lose Troy's wall, and her citizens' liberty with it."

Speaking, he rush'd to the front; and his kinsman follow'd behind him:
Then, to the Argive host, spake the great Telamonian Ajax.

"Stand up as men, O friends! and remember the fame you have once won!
Each man, modestly vie with his comrade in perilous daring!
More, who venture thus, are preserved, than are mark'd for destruction.
Skulkers from fight oft lose both honor and safety together."

Thus did the chieftain speak: and his comrades burn'd for the combat;
Weighing his cheering words:—and they form'd as a fence to the galleys,
E'en as a brazen wall:—Zeus hurtled the Trojans against it.
Then was Nestor's son thus accosted by brave Menelàus.

"None of Achaia's host, O Antilochus! claims to surpass thee,
Either in youthful grace, or in speed, or in strength for the combat!
Venture a stroke at Troy!—some Trojan is fated to feel it!"

Thus did he speak; and retreated: the youth, excitedly, forward
Leapt from the foremost ranks; and he darted his weapon before him,
Casting his glances around:—Troy's van went scattering backward;
Fearing the flying lance: but it flew not in vain; for the strong shaft
Struck down, prone to the dust, Hiketaon's son, Melanippus;
As, on his way to the front, he was piercing the fight; it transfix'd him.
Thundering he fell to the earth, dark mists floated over his eyelids.
Swift, to despoil his foe, did Antilochus spring; as a deer-hound
Springs on a wounded fawn; which the hunter's arm has disabled,
Striking the helpless beast as it springs from its lair, on the hill-side:
So upon thee, Melanippus! Antilochus, greedy of combat,

Sprang, to despoil his foe :—but the action was noted by Hector :
And, thro' the raging strife, did he hastily rush to defend thee !
Brave, and renown'd in fight, yet Antilochus fear'd to await him ;
But, as a fierce wild beast, having ventured some horrible outrage,—
Slaughter'd a herdsman's dog, or the herdsman himself, 'mid his oxen,—
Trembles, and slinks away, ere the peasants assemble to slay him ;
Thus slunk Nestor's son from his foe :—and the Trojans and Hector
Sent, with appalling shouts, their galling weapons behind him.
Till, as he reach'd his friends, he again turn'd, ready for battle.

Meanwhile, Troy's fierce troops, like to lions fed upon raw-flesh,
Rush'd on the Argive fleet :—and accomplish'd the purpose of high Zeus ;
Them, for a while, he endow'd with a vigor and strength for the combat ;
Mulcting of glory, awhile, and depressing the souls of the Argives.
Honor and fame in fight, unto Hector, the God had determined
Still to award and increase, till the chief on the high-crown'd galleys
Scatter'd the fire, and raised an unquenchable blaze; and accomplish'd
Thus the unrighteous prayer that was granted to Thetis :—for great Zeus
Meant, of the blazing vessel himself to behold the effulgence.
Purposing, then, that the tide of the fight should again be reverted :
Troy driven back in disorder ; and victory crowning Achaia.
With such thoughts in his mind did he urge, to the storm of the galleys,
Hector, Priam's son;—and the chief was a willing assailant :
Raging, as Arès' self, with his brandish'd spear :—or as bright flame
Crowning a mountain's brow, as it roars through the depths of the woodlands.
Whiten'd with foam were his lips : and, beneath his two terrible eyebrows,
Gleam'd, with a lurid effulgence, his flashing eyes ; and his head-piece
Dreadfully waved and nodded ; and rattled aloud on his temples,
E'en as he moved in fight:—for he fought with a mighty protector ;
Zeus ; who now, from on high, was bestowing on him, above all men,
Honor, and fame in war:—yet he moved with a destiny o'er him ;
Fated to death premature :—for his fate was already approaching ;

Fate at the hands of Pelides; incited by Pallas Athenè.

Now, thro' the hostile ranks, he attempted a passage;—selecting
Ever the densest array, and the foes who were richest accoutred.
But, despite his attempts, were the ranks unbroken before him.
For, in a tower of strength, all stood combined:—as a great rock,
Scorning the foot of man, with its smooth base wash'd by the waters,
Stands unshaken, unmoved, by the whistling blasts of the wild winds;
And by the whirling waves, that rise up, surging against it;
Thus, did the Danaan host stand firmly awhile to the Trojans.
Till, as his armor shot bright flashes around him, did Hector
Fall on the ranks of his foes; as a huge wave, driven by tempests,
Bursts on a vessel's prow: and the whole of the deck of the galley
Lies conceal'd in foam-flakes:—high up aloft in the sail-cloth
Rages the roaring wind: and, aghast and desponding, the sailors
Gaze on the storm: for death each instant is present before them.
Not less sunk and depress'd was the soul of the sons of Achaia.
And, as a lion descends, in his fierceness of heart, on the oxen,
Pasturing, thousands at once, on the smooth greensward of the marsh-land;
Having a herdsman among them, who is not accustom'd to combat
Stoutly, for lives of kine, with the paws and the teeth of a wild beast;
But walks listlessly on, now in front, now in rear of the cattle;
Careless of danger near: till the great beast, springing among them,
Seizes a bull, and the herd fly affrighted:—the sons of Achaia
Thus fled wildly, at last, panic-stricken by Hector and great Zeus.
One man only was slain; Periphètes, born at Mycènæ;
Copreus' son well-loved; who had formerly borne from Eurystheus,
Unto the mighty Heràcles, his mandate of manifold labors.
From such a sire as this sprang a far better man than his father:
Graced with virtues many; renown'd in the race, and in battle;
And in his gifts of mind not worse than the best of Mycènæ.
Such was the man, now doom'd to ennoble the triumph of Hector.
For, as he turn'd to retreat, he his foot, in the rim of his buckler,

Caught :—in his great round shield, which he bore as a fence from the jav'lins,
Spreading from shoulder to heel ;—so that, tripping, he fell : and his head-piece
Prone, as he came to the earth, clash'd terribly loud on his temples.
Hector his fall perceived, overtook him in haste, and transfix'd him ;
Driving the spear in his breast ;—full in view of his grieving companions ;
Those who, loving him well, were unable to yield him assistance ;
Or to defend their comrade ;—so great was their terror of Hector.
All eyes bent on the galleys, they fled in dismay ;—and retreated
Past the high poops of the ships first drawn up in line :—and the Trojans
Follow'd :—the Argive troops, now forced to the rear of the first row,
Crowded behind their galleys—and stood in a mass, though disorder'd,
Right in front of the tents, nor were scatter'd in camp : but were kept there
Both by fear and shame. Each man was exhorting his comrade.
Most of all did the guard of Achaia, Gerenian Nestor,
Urge and entreat each man, and adjure him, by love of his fathers—

"Quit ye like men, O friends !—Let each in his bosom remember
All that he owes to his comrades !—And think upon all at his own hearth ;
Children, spouse well-loved, and his parents, his home, and his substance.
Think upon all who survive, upon all who have perish'd before us.
By those absent ones, let me earnestly pray and adjure you,
Stand yet firm in fight—and resist a disastrous panic !"

Thus did the Elder speak, and he roused up the souls of his hearers.
Then the surrounding mist of the battle, did Pallas Athenè
Roll, far away from their eyes :—and the light shone brightly on both sides :
Here, on the Argive fleet ; and there, on the dubious battle.
Hector, redoubtable chief, stood clearly in view ; and his comrades :
They who, declining the fight, were standing aloof to the rearward ;
They who were pressing in front, for a share in the storm of the galleys.

Nor, did it now content the magnanimous valor of Ajax,

Still to abide in the throng, with the rest of the sons of Achaia.
But with majestic strides he ascended the decks of the galleys.
Both his hands were grasping a boarding-weapon ;—of cubits
Twenty and two in length, well banded together with brass bands.
Just as a man may be seen who, accustom'd to ride upon horses,
Picks, from a numerous herd, four steeds ; and, united in one yoke,
Drives them away from the plain to the walls of a populous city,
Choosing a crowded road ;—and the populace wonder to see him ;
Men and women alike ;—and he safely, without hesitation,
Shifts from back unto back, as the steeds are careering beneath him ;
Thus, far striding aloft, did Ajax—vessel by vessel—
Traverse the decks of the fleet ;—and his voice rang loud in the clear air ;
Calling the Danaans on with a terrible shout ; and exhorting
All to defend their tents and ships of the fleet.—Nor did Hector
Tarry awhile in the crowd of the cuirass'd ranks of the Trojans :
But, as a golden eagle descends with a swoop, and affrightens
Some great flock of birds, which feed in the marsh by the stream-side ;
Swans with extended necks, or the cranes, or the clamorous wild-geese ;
Thus, and as straight in his rush, did Hector swoop on a vessel,
Marking its dark-blue prow ;—for the hand of Zeus was behind him ;
Pressing him mightily on, and urging the people to aid him.

Bitter, and fierce, was the struggle, again, by the poops of the galleys.
One might have deem'd that men, unwearied in fight and unwounded,
Fed the recruited war ;—so fierce was the obstinate combat.
These were the warriors' thoughts, as they struggled in fight :—the Achaians
Deem'd they would never escape from the present misfortune ; but die there.
While, in the ranks of Troy, each man had a fierce expectation ;
Hoping to fire the fleet, and to slay the heroic Achaians.
With such thoughts, at heart, did the foes stand ; fronting each other.
Hector, at last, laid hold on the poop of a sea-tracking galley ;—
Beautiful, swift-sailing vessel ;—that erst brought Protesilàus

Unto the shores of Troy; doom'd ne'er to revisit his own land.
Round this far-famed bark did Achaia's sons, and the Trojans,
Meet, at quarters close, in a murderous struggle.—No waiting,
There, for levell'd shaft, or long-lance aim'd at a distance:
Hand unto hand was the combat; and all, with a like resolution,
Fought, with stroke of falchion, and crush and thrust of the pole-axe;
Sweep of great broadsword, and of partisan wielded in both hands.
Many a beautiful blade, dark-handled and heavily-hilted,
Dash'd from a warrior's hold, or relinquish'd by hand of the dying,
Glitter'd on earth, underfoot;—and the blood trickled dark on the dank ground.
But, having seized on the poop, great Hector refused to release it;
Grasping the carved-work tight, thus he lustily called to the Trojans.

"Bring up the flames! and press the assault yet closer upon them!
Here is a day from Zeus worth all of the days we have lived yet!
One which gives us the galleys—that, coming here,—spite of the great Gods,—
Work'd many evils for us, by the folly and sloth of the elders:
Elders who, prompt, as I was, to adventure in fight for the galleys,
Kept me perforce from war, and hinder'd the people behind me.
But, in the days gone by, if the broad-brow'd Zeus has benumb'd us,
Now he impels us forward, and mightily urges the battle."

Thus did he speak:—his troops press'd heavier yet on the Argives.
Ajax could not remain; he was gall'd full sore by the jav'lins;
But he receded a space—for he deem'd that near was his death-day—
Unto the rowers' seats, and abandon'd the deck of the galley.
Then did he turn and stand, and awaited behind, with his weapon[k];

[k] Only the two extremities of the vessel were decked; and the middle was open; like modern barges. So that Ajax, standing in the centre, between the seats of the rowers, was himself to a great extent protected; and at the same time with his boarding-pike was able to attack those who approached the stern.

Ready to slaughter the Trojan who dared to approach with the bright blaze.
Still, to the Danaan ranks, rose his loud voice, lustily shouting.

"Comrades! Danaan heroes! ye soldiers, and servants of Arès!
Quit ye like men, O friends! and remember your recent achievements!
Think ye, that we can find some better protection behind us?
Think ye, a wall is nigh,—as a refuge for men who are vanquish'd?—
No!—There is no wall here, with a circle of bulwarks to screen us!
Where we may hope to retreat, and to find new lines of defenders.—
We are on soil of Troy!—On soil cover'd thick with her soldiers!—
Back'd but by Ocean's waves; and away, far away, is our own land.
Safety can only be won by—not shrinking—but prowess of right hands."

Speaking, he forward press'd; with his keen spear levell'd before him;
Guarding the hollow ship: and whoever presumed to attempt it,
Bearing the burning flame—thus striving for Hector's approval—
Ajax struck him down, when approaching the ship, with his long lance.—
Twelve did he slaughter thus; in the front of the galley, in close fight.

BOOK THE SIXTEENTH.

Shows how Patroclus fought, and died by the weapon of Hector.

Thus, by the well-bench'd galley, the hosts strove, stoutly, in combat.
When, by Achilleus' side, by the shepherd-of-people, Patroclus
Stood, with warm tears fast overflowing his eyes; as a fountain
Scatters its dark drops down from a crag where the goat never browses.
E'en as he look'd on his friend, pity enter'd the soul of Achilleus;
And, with wingèd words, he accosted the chief, and address'd him.

"Why those tears, my Patroclus?—You weep as an innocent maiden;
E'en as a foolish infant; who, running along by its mother,
Clings to the skirt of her garment, attempting to stay her departure;
Looking her full in the face; and begging, with tears, that she lift her.
Such, you resemble most, in your softness of tears, my Patroclus!
Is it some evil news of my Myrmidons, or of my own self?
Or does a private grief from Phthia arrive to afflict you?
Actor's son lives on: men say that Menœtius prospers;
Peleus still survives, with his Myrmidons gather'd around him:
Any mischance unto these would yield us the deepest affliction.
Or, do you really lament for the Argive host; who are falling,
Fast, by the hollow ships, and are paying the price of the trespass?
Tell it, nor keep it conceal'd! whatever it be, let us share it!"

Then, with a deep-drawn groan, thou answeredst, knightly Patroclus!

"Peleus' offspring, Achilles, far noblest of all the Achaians!
Do not be wroth at thy friend; in this sore strait of Achaia!

All of her mightiest leaders, who erst were her best and her bravest,
Stricken by spear or arrow, are held by their wounds to the galleys.
Pierced by an arrow-point is Tydeus' son, Diomedes;
Wounded by thrusts of spears are Odysseus, and Agamemnon;
Pierced by a shaft in his thigh is Eurypylus, son of Evœmon.
They may be heal'd, perchance: soft drugs may be mighty to save them:
Leeches may salve their wounds:—but *thou* art unsoftened, Achilleus!
Oh! far away from my breast be the wrath thou lovest to brood o'er!
Brave, but to others' bane!—Oh! how can posterity bless thee,
If, in the day of doom, thou avert'st not fate from the Argives?
Ruthless man!—Thy sire was never the chivalrous Peleus!
No Goddess-mother thine! But the gray sea, surely, produced thee.
Rocks, inaccessible, bore thee: with mind more rough than the sea-cliffs!—
But, if the cause be this, that words of oracular boding
Move thee; or aught, from Zeus, that thy Goddess-mother has told thee;
Then send *me* in thy place; and marshal thy people beneath me;
Even thy Myrmidon host.—Even I may illumine the darkness:
Let thine armor be mine; thine own mail blaze on my shoulders.
And, as they gaze upon *me*, Troy's sons will abate from the onset;
Deeming that *thou* art there:—and the war-worn sons of Achaia
Gain yet a breathing-time; and a respite short from the contest.
Fresh upon wearied men, our war-cry alone would avail us;
Back, to the base of their rampart, to drive off the foes from the galleys."

Thus he, infatuate, pray'd; and entreated, and made supplication;
Begging to hasten his death, and the black fate yet at a distance.
Then, sore troubled at heart, spake the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Ah! woe is me! What a speech thou'st ventured to utter, Patroclus!
No prophet's voice do I dread; I have heard no oracular bodings.
Nor is it aught, from Zeus, that my Goddess-mother has told me.
It is the constant grief that maddens my mind and my bosom;
Writhing beneath that wrong which another, no better than I am,
Dared to inflict; when he robbed me; by force of his stronger dominion.

This is the raging sorrow and wrong ever burning within me.
Even my maid well-loved, my prize from the sons of Achaia,
Captive e'en of my spear, whom I saved from the sack of her city,
Her, from my own strong arms, has your monarch, your King, Agamemnon,
Atreus' son, torn away; as it were from a beggarly outcast.
But, what is past and gone, let us suffer to rest.—I intended
Not to retain my wrath an unlimited time;—though I purposed
Never to lay it aside ere the day when the storm of the battle
Roll'd, as I knew that it would, so near as to threaten my own ships.
Since that day has arrived;—let my bright arms gleam on thy shoulders!
Lead, to the shock of the battle, my Myrmidons; eager for combat.
See! as a dark-blue cloud, how the lowering host of the Trojans
Gathers around yon fleet!—How narrow the strip of the seaboard
Held by the Argive bands; sole space 'twixt them and perdition.
While, all around, in their faces, all Troy comes foaming against them:
Comes with bosoms elate.—No helmet of mine to affright her,
Gleaming against her ranks — those ranks which had choked yon entrenchments
Deep with heaps of slain, had the monarch, the King, Agamemnon,
Treated me well: while now his camp is the prize of the combat.
No more, now, does Tydides, the valorous chief Diomedes,
Brandish his dreadful weapon; averting the fate of the Argives.
No more, now, can I hear the detested voice of Atrides:
E'en *his* throat is hush'd.—But the voice of the homicide Hector,
Calling his Trojans on, rings, echoing round; and their tumult
Answers; as, flooding the plain, they whelm in the battle Achaia.
Therefore, as thus it is, fall lustily on them, Patroclus!
Rescue the threaten'd fleet, lest flames encompass the galleys:
Lest, by the hostile blaze, our homeward return be arrested.
But, take heed unto me, and carefully mark what I tell thee!
Winning, thus, for thy friend, great honor; and excellent glory
From the Achaian host: so, the maiden of marvellous beauty
They may restore yet again, with gifts superadded beside her.—
Having repelled our foes from the fleet, return hither:—and if Zeus,

Herè's thundering Lord, give glory in fight—as he *may* give—
Do not be tempted, by this, to indulge by thyself in the combat,
'Gainst Troy's warlike sons ;—at the cost of thy friend's reputation :
Nor, led away by the rapture of strife, and excitement of battle,
Slaughtering Trojan lives, lead the troops to the wall of her stronghold :
Lest some one of the Gods, ever-living, who dwell on Olympus,
Meet thee !—There is a God who regards them dearly—Apollo !
But having once let light in again on the fleet, to the galleys
Hasten :—and, out on the plain, let the hosts end their quarrel together.
Would, in the name of Zeus, and Athenè's self, and Apollo !
None of the sons of Troy might escape with life from the combat ;
None of the Argive host :—so that *we*, the two only survivors[a],
Might, unimpeded, heave Troy's battlements from her foundations !"

Thus did the chieftains hold high converse, one with the other.
Ajax, the while, no longer remain'd at his post : for the jav'lins
Gall'd him : and hostile Zeus, and the missiles thrown by the Trojans,
Wearied him out, at last. Loud clatter'd the helm on his temples,
Under the ringing blows ; the embroider'd straps of the head-piece
Yielded to dint of spears ; and his strong left shoulder was wearied,
Bearing his buckler up as a fence from the darts. Yet the foemen,
Pressing him hard with spears, were unable, as yet, to dislodge him.
Painfully came respiration, and slow ; and, heavy, the sweat-drops
Flowed from his wearied limbs in a stream ; not a moment of respite ;
Not one breathing-space ; but evils, redoubled on evils.

Tell me, ye Muses divine ! ye who dwell in the homes of Olympus !
How did the foemen's flame first fall on the fleet of Achaia ?

Hector press'd to the front ; and the huge ashen weapon of Ajax
Smote, with his great broadsword, where the shaft fitted into the spear-head,

[a] There is, surely, a touch of savage humour, as well as of irritation, about the wish thus expressed : which seems to have escaped commentators.

Cleaving the weapon asunder.—The great Telamonian Ajax
Brandish'd, in vain, his spear; now a harmless staff; and, afar off,
Tumbled the brazen head; and resounded, aloud, on the shingle.
Ajax felt, in his mind, 'twas an ominous stroke; and he shudder'd,
As at the work of the Gods: for he saw how the Lord of the thunder
Render'd his efforts vain, and victory gave to the Trojans.
So, he avoided the shafts; and had barely withdrawn, when the foemen
Pour'd in the burning torches; the blaze fast master'd the galley:
Over the high-built poop ran the flickering flame; and Achilleus
Smote on his thigh in haste; and shouted aloud to Patroclus.

"Hasten, my high-born friend! O Patroclus, ruler of war-steeds!
Hard, by the galleys' sides, are the bright flames toss'd by the foemen.
What, if the galleys burn, and our homeward return be arrested?
On with mine arms, in haste: and I will assemble the soldiers."

Thus did the hero speak; and Patroclus girt on the armor.
First, on his stalwart legs, did he fasten the greaves; all in silver
Shone, on the edge of the armor, the hasps where it fitted together.
Then, on his dauntless breast, did he buckle the radiant cuirass,
Bright with gleaming stars; as befitted the mail of Pelides.
Then, on his shoulder, suspended the broadsword, studded in silver;
All of brass was the blade:—then wielded the ponderous buckler.
Then, on his gallant head, he adjusted the weight of the head-piece,
Tufted with horses' hair; and the plumes nodded terribly o'er it.
Then took two strong spears: both fitted his hands as he held them.
One weapon only he took not, the spear of the mighty Pelides;
Huge and stalwart beam; which none, among all the Achaians,
Brandish'd aloft, in fight: spear, wielded alone by Achilleus.
High, upon Pelion's range, was the tough ash nurtured; and Chiron
Fell'd it, and gave it his sire; to be used in destruction of heroes.
Hastily then he commanded Automedon harness the war-steeds;
After Achilles' self whom honor'd he most among all men;
Nor was a trustier friend to be found 'mid the shock of an onset.

So, were the swift-limbed steeds by Automedon yoked to the war-car;
Xanthus, Balius too; they rivall'd the breezes in swiftness:
Zephyrus, sire of the chargers, begot them of Harpy Podargè;
E'en as she roved and fed on the meads, by the stream of the Ocean.
Pedasus, perfect steed, was harness'd with them in a side-trace,
Brought from Eëtion's town, as a trophy of war, by Achilleus;
And, though a mortal horse, now harness'd along with immortals.
Meanwhile, the Myrmidon ranks were marshall'd in arms by Achilleus,
Rousing them up from tent unto tent:—and they, as the wild wolves
Reeking from recent carnage, with appetite yet unabated,
Fresh from the scene of slaughter of some huge stag on the mountains,
Slain for a morning meal,—their muzzles besprinkled with blood-drops,—
Rush, in a herd, to the sources of some black fountain of waters,
Lapping the dark clear stream with their long thin tongues;—from their paunches
Belching the curdled gore; while insatiable longing for carnage
Swells their savage breasts, and rumbles like thunder within them:—
Such, and as fierce as these, did the Myrmidon leaders and chieftains,
Circling the charioteer of the swift-footed hero Pelides,
Rush to the field of fight.—In the midst was the mighty Achilleus;
Urging the chargers on, and the buckler'd ranks of the spearmen.

Fifty, in number, came swift ships to the shores of the Troad,
Under the care of Achilles, the Zeus-loved leader! In each ship,
Fifty in number came men accustom'd to work at the rowlocks.
Five were the leaders, brave, whom he gave to the host; and intrusted
With a command; yet retaining supreme sway steadily o'er them.
Chief of the foremost band, clad in glittering mail, was Menestheus;
Son of a heaven-born stream, of the Zeus-fed torrent Spercheius.
Him did the daughter of Peleus, the beautiful nymph Polydora,
Bear to the Water-God;—an Immortal wedding a woman.
Yet was he reckon'd the offspring of Borus, thy son, Perières!
Borus, who openly wed her, and gave rich gifts for the dowry.
Over the second band was the warrior-leader Eudorus;

Born of a maiden fair, light-footed in dance, Polymele;
Phylas' beautiful child; whom the terrible slayer of Argus
Sighted, with eyes of love, as she tripp'd in the train of the dancers,
E'en in the choral dance of the gold-shafted Goddess of hunters.
So, when the dance was over, did Hermes, mounting her chamber,
Secretly seek her side; and she bore him a notable offspring,
Even Eudorus' self: stout combatant, swift in the foot-race.
But, when the time was come, when the mother of groans, Eilithya,
Brought him to light of day, and to gaze on the rays of the sunshine;
Then did Actor's son, the redoubtable leader, Echecleus,
Lead her away as a bride, giving numberless gifts as a dowry.
Phylas, the while, maintained his daughter's son; and the young child
Circled the old man's heart: and he lived as a son with the elder.
Chief of the third of the bands, was the warrior-leader Pisander;
Maimalus' warlike son; above all of the Myrmidon armies
Skilled in the use of the spear—thou only excepted, Patroclus!
Phœnix, driver-of-steeds, was the aged chief of the fourth band:
Over the fifth and last, was Alcimedon, son of Laerces.

So, having marshall'd all, well under their leaders, Achilleus,
Standing amid their ranks, with vehement ardor address'd them.

"Myrmidons! do not forget what threats, so long, ye indulged in;
How, in the sharp-beak'd galleys, ye ever were daring the Trojans,
—While mine anger raged,—and taunting myself with reproaches.
'Hard-hearted Peleus' son! 'Twas on gall that thy mother has rear'd thee;
'Cruel! to coop up, thus, in the ships, thine unwilling companions!
'Better it were, in the galleys that bound o'er the face of the Ocean,
'Back to return, at once:—so fell is the anger within thee!'
Such were the taunts that ye used in your mutinous meetings!—Behold now,
Yonder, is that fierce work ye so long have been lusting and mad for!
Whoso is stout of heart, let him now measure might with the Trojans."

Thus did their leader address them, arousing the souls of his hearers;

And, as they heard their Prince, their ranks gather'd tighter together.
As when a mason, building the wall of a sumptuous dwelling,
Fits the compacted stones, as a fence from the blast of the tempest;
Not less close, in the ranks, grew helmets and bosses of bucklers:
Shield lock'd shield, helm helm, and man stood hard by his fellow;
While, on the warriors' heads, on their crests, with an uniform motion,
Nodded the horse-hair tufts;—so thick were they banded together.
Far in the front of the host, two champions, gleaming in armor,
Breathing a single soul, Automedon close by Patroclus,
Hot for the coming fight, led the Myrmidon van.—But Achilleus
Went to his inmost tent, and he open'd the lid of a coffer,
Fair, and of curious work; which the Goddess, whose feet are as silver,
Placed in his ship ere it sail'd, and stored it with radiant garments:
Vestures repelling wind, and carpets heavily broider'd.
There lay a sculptured goblet, of exquisite finish, which no man
Ever, beside himself, had fill'd with the sparkling vintage;
And unto Father Zeus it had only been used in libation.
This did he take from the coffer; and first burnt sulphur to cleanse it;
Then with the pure clear water he rinsed all over the goblet;
Then, having wash'd his hands, fill'd the cup with the sparkling vintage;
Then, in the midst of his court, stood praying; and pour'd a libation,
Raising his look to the skies;—and his words reach'd Him of the thunder.

"Hear me, Pelasgic Zeus!—that rulest, afar, on Dodona,
Throned on its storm-torn range;—and, around, thy prophets, the Selli,
Dwell, with feet unwash'd; earth only the couch of their slumbers.
Once, when I pray'd, thou heardest the prayer that I proffer'd before thee;
Honor awarding to me; heavy doom to the sons of Achaia.
Hear me, again, this once! grant now this thing which I ask for!
I, by the side of my galley, abide, yet afar from the combat;
But, I am sending forth, to the battle, my friend, with my armies.
Give him, O broad-brow'd Zeus! give him victory, honor, and glory!
Strengthen his heart and hands! string his nerves for the battle! That Hector

May ascertain if my friend can *alone* play his part in the contest;
Whether, when single-handed, his strength is not great as it once was,
When, by the side of myself, he was known in the struggle of Arès.
And, when the din of fight he has driven afar from the navy,
Grant him a speedy return, back again to the sides of the galleys;
Safe, with mine arms intact, and no loss to my martial attendants!"

Thus did the chieftain pray:—his prayer reach'd Zeus, and he heard it.
Part did the Father grant; but the weightier part he rejected.
Far from the leaguer'd navy to scatter the storm of the battle,
This did the God concede:—but a happy return he vouchsafed not.

So, having pray'd his prayer, and pour'd unto Zeus a libation,
Back to his tent he return'd, and placed in the coffer the goblet.
Then in the front of his tent stood eagerly watching, expectant
Of the increasing fray, and the strife between Troy and Achaia.

Meanwhile, the cuirass'd ranks who were led to the fight by Patroclus
March'd with eager hearts, all hot to encounter the Trojans.
Angrily forth they went, as the wasps, disturb'd in their dwellings
Hard by the highway side; whom boys, in the folly of childhood,
Harass, with ceaseless attack; molesting their nests, and forgetful
That their accustom'd sport brings danger to many beside them:
These, at a later hour, if a wayfarer happens to pass them,
Willing to leave them alone, all about him, in valorous fury,
Come, with the whole of the swarm, all ready to fight for their offspring.
Not less bold and strong, from the galleys the Myrmidon armies
Pour'd on the Trojan foes: loud echoed the cry of their onset.
While, to his soldiers around, thus lustily shouted Patroclus.

"Myrmidons! fellows in arms of Peleus' offspring, Achilleus,
Quit ye like men, O friends! and remember your former achievements!
So, by our feats in fight, we may honor our leader, Pelides.

Proving us worthy attendants of him, far the first of the Argives.
So, may the haughty Atrides, the wide-ruling king Agamemnon,
Feel what folly was his to dishonor the bravest Achaian."

Thus did the warrior speak, and he roused up the soul of his hearers;
Straight on the ranks of Troy fell his men in a mass;—while the galleys
Echoed the rattling sound of the cheers of the sons of Achaia.
As for the men of Troy, when they saw the brave son of Menœtius,
Him, and his charioteer, bright gleaming in armor against them,
All their courage fled, their ranks grew looser and wider;
For they imagined, again, by the ships the swift-footed Pelides,
Laying his anger aside, had been reconciled back to the battle.
Each man look'd to his rear, for a way to escape from destruction.

Then, first stroke in the fray, flew a spear from the arm of Patroclus;
E'en where the press was thickest, the tumult of strife was the greatest;
Close by the stern of the ship of the high-soul'd Protesilaus:
Striking Pyræchmes down; he had led his Pæonian levies
From far Amydon's walls, and from Axius' devious current;
Piercing his shoulder-blade; so he rolled in the dust, and his comrades,
Crested with horsehair plumes, fled afar:—his Pæonian soldiers
Left him groaning in blood, unnerv'd by his fate—and Patroclus
Turn'd them to flight, appall'd at the death of their best and their bravest;
Drove them away from the fleet, and extinguished the flames, which were mounting.
There, half burnt as it was, lay the rescued ship—while the Trojans
Fled as panic-stricken—behind them the sons of Achaia
Pour'd from between their galleys, and wild grew the tumult about them.
As, with a sudden flash, when Zeus, great Lord of the lightning,
Breaks up a thick black cloud, which has shadow'd the crest of a mountain;
And, as the gloom rolls back, all the topmost peaks, and the landmarks,
Forests, and all stand out, as the sky clears rapidly round them:
So, to the Danaan host, when the flames had been turn'd from the galleys,

Came brief breathing-space.—But the war had not yet been extinguish'd:
For Troy, driven at first, by the furious charge of Achaia,
Far from the black-prow'd ships, came rallying back; and her soldiers,
Still, contested the fight; and were loath to relinquish the galleys.
Then, in the scatter'd strife, each Argive slew an opponent:
Each of the leaders slew:—and first, the brave son of Menœtius
Slaughter'd Arèilycus, as he turn'd him to fight, and transfix'd him;
Dashing the brazen spear thro' the warrior's thigh, and the spear-point
Shatter'd the solid bone, and he tumbled to earth in the death-faint.
Thoas died by the lance of the warrior-chief Menelaus,
Pierced in his gallant breast, as he left it exposed from his buckler.
Phyleus' son observed, and prevented, the blow of Amphiclus;
Striking him full on the top of the thigh; where, deepest and thickest,
Lies man's folded muscle: the sinews, under the spear-point
Ripp'd up, parted aside, and darkness shadow'd his eyelids.
Nestor's sons fought well: for the one hit Atymnius, sideways;
Driving the pointed spear thro' his flank; and he roll'd in the death-faint,
Under the arm of Antilochus:—swift, as he fell, to avenge him,
Maris, bestriding the corpse, struck short and sharp at the victor;
Grieved at his brother's loss:—but ere yet the blow had descended,
—Quicker and better aim'd,—did the lance of the brave Thrasymedes
Strike his uplifted arm, by the shoulder-joint;—and the spear-point,
Rending the muscles away, brake the bone off, close by the socket.
Thundering he fell to the earth, and darkness shadow'd his eyelids.

Thus, by brothers slain, did two bold brothers, to Hades
Traverse the darksome way; they were fellows in arms of Sarpedon,
Skill'd in the use of the dart—Amisodarus' sons, who Chimæra
Nourish'd, abhorrent pest, dread scourge unto many mortals.

Ajax, Oïleus' son, fierce charging the press, Cleobulus
Seized, as a living prize; as he stood, sore hurt and disabled,
In the bewilder'd throng: but, soon, on his neck did the broadsword
Sweep, unnerving his strength;—all blood was the blade; o'er his eyeballs

Floated the crimson death, Fate closing her fingers upon him.

Lycon charged, and Peneleus, front upon front: for a jav'lin
Each, at the other, aimed; and had missed in his aim:—so that both ran
On, with bare broadswords, and encounter'd together; and Lycon
Shorten'd the Argive's helm by its horsehair crest: but the falchion
Broke away, hard at the hilt; and Peneleus, under his left ear
Struck him a trenchant blow; for the sword shore through, and his head fell
Dangling, held by the skin; and his limbs sank loose in the death-faint.

Merion speedily follow'd, and smote down, Acamas flying;
Striking him, close at hand, as he mounted his steeds; thro' the shoulder.
Headlong, he fell from the car; and a mist floated over his eyeballs.

Erymas died by Idomeneus, hit in the mouth; and the spear-head,
Forcing its ruthless path, went right through, rending its way out
Under the base of the skull:—all the white bones shatter'd before it;
Teeth all shiver'd away.—From his eyes, by the force of the death-stroke,
Started the oozing blood; and in blood, from his mouth and his nostrils,
Came his expiring sobs, as death's dark shade overwhelm'd him.

Thus, of the Danaan leaders, did each man slaughter a foeman.

Just as rapacious wolves, when roving around on a mountain,
Mark how listless swains have neglected their flock, and have left it
Scatter'd afar on the fells; and they instantly fall on the victims,
Lambs or bleating kids, and harry the lives of the weaklings:
So, on the troops of Troy, came the Danaan host;—while the Trojans
Reck'd of nought but flight, nor remember'd their former achievements.

Ajax the great, meanwhile, for the bright brass helmet of Hector
Kept his spear prepared; but the Trojan, wary in warfare,
Spread on his strong broad shoulders his buckler, coated with bulls'-hide;

Marking, beneath that screen, how the arrows hiss'd, and the spears rang.
Well did he wit that the foe had again won turn of advantage;
Yet, did he tarry awhile, and protected his friends and his comrades.

As, on a summer's day, when Zeus, from the crest of Olympus,
Rolls up a thunder-cloud, with a dark squall scudding before it;
So, from the front of the ships, fled the panic, the rout, and the tumult;
So, the discomfited foes went the way that they came.—Even Hector,
Arms and all, went off, by the speed of his steeds;—and, behind him,
Left his men of Troy to their fate, in the fatal entrenchment;
Down in the deep dark ditch; now encumber'd with cars, which the war-steeds,
Snapping the poles short off, sent tumbling over their dead lords.
Hard, on the shatter'd rear, came Patroclus; cheering his Argives,
Heavy with mighty designs upon Troy: who, in panic and turmoil,
Choked, with her broken armies, the ways of retreat: and the dust-storm
Drifted up, high as the clouds; as the hoofs of the terrified chargers
Rush'd to the Trojan wall, from the Argive fleet and encampment.
And,—wheresoever he saw that the press was thickest,—Patroclus
Charged, with appalling shouts.—Prone, under the axles, the drivers
Fell from their seats; their cars came, rolling and rattling, o'er them.
But, with a rush and a bound, did the terrible steeds of Pelides,
—Given to Peleus' self, as a gift from the Gods,—on the far side
Light, of the cumber'd trench:—for their driver was eager for Hector;
Eager to meet him in fight:—but his steeds yet kept them asunder.

As when the sodden earth lies black in the gloom of the storm-cloud
On an autumnal day, when Zeus sends heaviest rain-fall,
Anger'd, perchance, with men, and his bosom incited against them;
Men, who have dared to pollute pure courses of law and of justice,
Mastering right with might, and neglecting the fear of the great Gods;
Therefore, throughout their land, do the torrents, down from the mountains,
Run, full fill'd to their brim, and the fierce streams cut the embankments,
Rolling in headlong course, from the uplands, down to the blue sea;

Bearing in one great wrack all weak devices of mortals;
Such, as they homeward fled, was the uproar and hurry of Troy's steeds.

But when Patroclus, thus, had defeated and severed the first ranks,
Back, to Achaia's fleet, did he double his course, intercepting
Troy's retreating troops, as they made for the town, and entrapp'd them,
There, in the narrow space, 'mid the ships, and the stream, and the rampart,
Meeting them, eager for slaughter; and heavy the toll he exacted.
Pronoüs died there, first; transfix'd by the glittering jav'lin;
Hit, where his shield, swung aside, had uncover'd his breast;—in the death-faint
Thund'ring he fell to the earth.—Then Thestor, offspring of Enops,
Died underneath his assault; for the Trojan, stricken with panic,
Down in his polish'd car, sat, crouching in fear; and the reins fell
Loose from his palsied hands:—so, Patroclus, standing beside him,
Spearing his pale right cheek, and smashing the teeth and the jaw-bone,
Drew him out of his car, on the point of the lance:—as an angler,
Sitting on some great rock overhanging the sea, by his fish-hook
Lifts, at the end of his tackle, a huge fish out of the ocean.
So did Achaia's chief drag his gasping foe o'er the car-rim;
Dashing him down on earth;—and his life, as he fell, left the carcass.
Then did he meet and prevent the attack of the brave Erylaus;
Striking him full on his head with a fragment of rock; and the head-piece,
Strong as it was, gave way; and the head burst asunder:—he dropt down
Dead on the crimson earth; and death crept numbingly o'er him.
Erymas went down next, with Amphoterus, too, and Epaltes,
Pyris, Echius next, and Tlepolemus, son of Damastor,
Ipheus then, and Evippus, and Argeas' son, Polymelus:
All these, under his arm, fell, roll'd in a heap on the greensward.

But as Sarpedon saw the uncinctured bands of his soldiers
Falling, slaughter'd in fight by the hands of the son of Menœtius,
Thus did he shout, in reproach, to his Lycians, brave as the Gods are.

"Lycians! where, for shame, are ye flying so hastily backwards?
I will, myself, to the front, and encounter this man; and will test him,
Who and what he is; and measure his might; who has heap'd ills,
Manifold, on Troy's sons; and has slacken'd the knees of her bravest."

Thus did the monarch speak, and he leapt to the ground in his bright arms;
And, on the other side, did Patroclus spring from his war-car.
Just as a pair of vultures, with curved beaks, talons retracted,
Perch'd on a jutting rock, with loud screams move to the combat;
With like rage and din, did the leaders encounter each other.

Them, as he saw, did he pity, the son of the crafty one, Cronos;
And unto Herè spake;—to his spouse and sister together.

"Ah! woe is me! for my son, for Sarpedon, dearest of all men:
Doom'd, by relentless fate, to be slain by the arm of Patroclus.
Torn is my mind with doubt, and my heart is distracted within me;
Whether, to snatch him away, yet alive, from the dolorous battle;
Placing him, safe and sound, on his Lycian soil; or to yield him,
Son as he is of mine own, as a prey to the son of Menœtius."

Rolling her full round eyes, thus answer'd the beautiful Herè.

"Cronides! sternest of Gods, what an ill-devised speech has escaped thee!
Mortal màn as he is, long fated and doom'd to destruction,
Wouldst thou bear him away, and redeem him at last from the death-stroke?
Do it! if such be thy will.—But the rest of the Gods will applaud not.
One word more will I speak; and heed thou well, and observe it!
If, on his home yet again, and his own land, enters Sarpedon,
Saved by thee, will none of the rest of the Gods for his own son
Strive to devise an escape from the risks of the perilous combat?
Many the sons of Gods who, around yon redoubtable bulwarks,

Cumber the field of fight.—Thus quarrels might enter among us.
But, if so dear is thy son, and thy heart is so tender about him,
Let him a soldier's death die gallantly, worsted in combat,
Vanquish'd in fight, by the arm of Patroclus, son of Menœtius.
And, when it all is o'er, and his breath has departed, and life gone;
Then let his body be carried, by Death and by Sleep, to his own land;
E'en to his Lycian home, and its broad fields: there shall his kinsfolk,
Brethren, and friends, to his honor, erect a big tumulus o'er him,
Crown'd with a far-seen pillar:—befitting reward of the great dead."

Thus did the Goddess speak, and the father of men and of mortals
Yielded: but over the field shed rain-drops, ruddy and sanguine:
Honoring, thus, his son;—fore-doom'd to be slain by Patroclus
On Troy's fertile fields;—far away from the land of his fathers.

Meanwhile, the two great foes drew near and yet nearer together.
First, from Patroclus' arm, flew a spear; and it hit Thrasymelus;
Valorous, stalwart leader, Sarpedon's trusty attendant;
Striking him deep in the base of the groin, and loosing his strong limbs.
Then, in turn, at his foe, flew the glittering lance of Sarpedon;
Missing the chief himself; but the javelin pierced in the shoulder
Pedasus, mortal steed; and it roll'd in the dust, with a death-scream,
Snorting away its life. The immortal chargers beside it
Swerved, and started asunder; the axle creaked; and the harness
All became intertangled;—the side-horse rolling in death-pangs—
Him, with a ready resolve, was Automedon speedily rid of;
Drawing his long bright sword from his thigh, he, without hesitation,
With one sharp quick stroke, cut the traces away of the dead steed;
And the immortal pair stood righted, and steady in harness.

Then the contending chiefs met again, for a final encounter.
First, from Sarpedon's arm, did a javelin fly; but the lance-point,
Missing Patroclus' breast, flew harmlessly over his shoulder;
Balking its master's aim.—Then, in turn, did the spear of Patroclus

Fly, not in vain, from his hand; but it struck on the front of the monarch,
Piercing his gallant breast, where the membranes twine in the heart-purse.
Then, as tumbles an oak, or the white-leaved mass of a poplar,
Or a majestic pine, which the woodcutters, high on the hill-side,
Fell with new-whetted axes, to serve as a mast for a galley;
Thus, in the front of his steeds and his car, fell the king; and, expiring,
Roll'd in the blood-stain'd dust; deep-gnashing his teeth in the death-pang.
As, when a lion's paws, invading the herds of a homestead,
Strike a majestic bull, high-couraged, tawnily-coated;
Under the fatal claws lies the great beast, panting and snorting:
So, of the Lycian shields, did the great chief, slain by Patroclus,
Strive, with his dying breath; and he call'd to his dearest companion.

"Glaucus! if ever fame as a soldier was thine, it behoves thee
Now to be bold in fight, and to hold thy renown as a soldier.
Brave and true if thou art, hail terrible war as enjoyment!
Traverse, first of all, thro' the Lycian ranks, and arouse them;
Hurry their leaders to fight,—for the prize is the corpse of Sarpedon.
And be alert thyself, and be eager to strike and avenge me.
Think! what shame were thine! what reproaches would ever attend thee!
E'en to thine end of days, what remorse!—were the sons of Achaia
Ever to win these arms, I have worn to my death, in the combat.
Play thou the hero thyself, and stir up the people beside thee!"

Thus, as the monarch utter'd, of death o'er his nostrils and eyeballs
Crept the eternal shade:—but the victor, treading his broad breast,
Tore from his bosom the lance, with the membranes clinging around it.
Life, and the lance's point, both parted at once from his great heart.
Meanwhile, the Myrmidon bands were seizing the reins of his war-steeds,
Eager for flight, but deserted by those who were wont to direct them.

Unto the words of his chieftain, in deep tribulation and anguish,

Glaucus gave his ear ;—for, alas, he was helpless to aid him.
Pressing the wound with his hand, he supported his elbow, disabled
Late at the storm of the wall, when Teucer's arrow had pierced him,
Driving him far from fight: and the wound yet throbbed and was painful.
Therefore, he stood, and pray'd to the far-darting archer, Apollo.

" Hear me, O powerful King !—Whether Lycia joy in thy presence,
Or Troy's well-built wall.—Wheresoever thou art, thou art able
Promptly to hear the complaint of a man sore afflicted as I am.
I have a grievous wound ; I am hurt in the arm ; and my right hand,
Rack'd with raging pain, is unfit for the fight ; and the blood flows,
Yet unstaunched, from the wound ; and my shoulder is numbed, and is lifeless.
It were in vain I attempted to handle the spear, or encounter
Active foes in fight.—Lo ! a hero has fallen among us,
Even Sarpedon's self ;—son of Zeus, who abandon'd his own son.
Yet, not the less, great King ! show favor to me ;—and my deep wound
Heal, and soothe its pain ! Vouchsafe to me strength, that my comrades
Yet may behold me, again exciting my soldiers to battle.
So, may I, even myself, take part in the strife for my dead king."

Thus did the hero pray, and his prayer reach'd Phœbus Apollo.
Quickly the healing God, assuaging the anguish, the dark blood
Staunched in the welling wound ;—and breath'd high spirit within him.
Well, in his inmost soul, did Glaucus perceive and rejoice at
Such convincing proof that his prayer had been heard by the great God.
Lycia's soldiers, first, he harangued, and excited the leaders,
Traversing all their ranks, to contend for the corpse of Sarpedon.
Then went, striding along, unto Troy's great chiefs : to Agenor,
And to his brother Polydamas ; valorous offspring of Panthus.
Then to Ænèas' self ; and last, close standing where Hector's
Bright helm lighted the fray, he excitedly spake and address'd him.

" Hector ! thy mind has become all forgetful of those who assist thee :

Those, for love of thee, who, away from their friends and their own land,
Waste their lives in fight :—and thou art remiss to assist them.
Dead is Sarpedon's self, who was Lycia's king, and commanded
All her shielded ranks, not alone by his prowess, but wisdom.
Him has brazen war subdued by the spear of Patroclus.
But, O my friends ! give aid ; and indignantly help and avenge him :
Lest that his armor be stripp'd, and his corpse be unworthily treated
By the Achaian troops, enraged for their men who have perish'd,
Slain at the hollow ships, by the blows of our terrible weapons."

Thus did the Lycian speak :—and a deep irresistible sorrow
Seized all Trojan hearts, at the fall of a chief who had propp'd up
Troy, as a buttress strong, though an alien born ;—for a great host
Follow'd his lead, and himself was the stoutest soldier among them.
So, in a throng, on the Argives, the Trojans charged :—in the front ranks,
Hector himself, sore grieved at Sarpedon's fall :—but Patroclus,
Bearing a dauntless heart, encouraged the men of Achaia ;
Singling out the Ajaces, as ready for battle as he was.

" Ye ! amid men of might, have been rivals, or better than rivals :
Emulate now the renown which you compass'd of yore, or surpass it !
Here is a man laid low who was first on the wall of Achaia ;
Even the mighty Sarpedon ! We surely can strip the equipments
Off, from a dead man's shoulders ; and some of his living companions,
Eager to save their lord, unto Hades send, to attend him !"

Thus did the hero speak ; and his hearers burn'd for the combat.
So, upon either side, did the combatants serry the phalanx.
Lycia there, and Troy ; here the Myrmidon ranks and Achaia,
Over Sarpedon's corpse, rush'd fiercely together to combat ;
Rush'd with appalling shouts ; and dire was the din of their bright arms.
Zeus, to ennoble the fray, roll'd night-like darkness around it :
So that the stress of fight might worthily compass his dead son.

Troy, in the first assault, drove backward the sons of Achaia,
Scared by the fall of a man, not the worst 'mid the Myrmidon armies ;
Even Epeigeus' self, brave son of high-minded Agàcles.
One who in former times had in Budium reigned, as a monarch,—
Times long past,—and then, by mischance, having slaughter'd a kinsman,
Fled unto Peleus' court, and to Thetis, whose feet were as silver.
They despatch'd him to war with that breaker of ranks, with Achilleus,
Unto the Ilian plain, as a soldier to fight with the Trojans.
Scarcely his hand had dared to lay hold of the body, when Hector
Shatter'd his head with a rock, and his strong helm parted asunder ;
Helmet and head both crush'd : so he fell down over Sarpedon,
Headlong : the mist of death came gloomily pouring upon him.
Grieved at his comrade's fate, thro' the skirmishers darted Patroclus ;
And, thro' the foremost ranks of the foe, did he break ; as a falcon
Swoops, upon silent wing, and scatters the daws and the starlings.
Thus, on the Lycian host, thou swoopedst, knightly Patroclus !
And, on the ranks of Troy ; all wroth at the fall of thy comrade ;
Striking to dust Sthenelaus, the valorous son of Ithœmon ;
Crushing his neck with a fragment of rock, and snapping the tendons.
Back went Troy's fierce van ; back yielded the valorous Hector;
Even as great a space as a strong man hurleth a jav'lin
When, in a trial of strength, he contends in the games ;—or encounters,
In war's sterner contest, the faces of venturous foemen.
For such a space, Troy's lines gave ground to the rush of Achaia's.
Glaucus, first—now leader of Lycia's shielded contingent—
Rallying, turn'd from flight ; and, turning, he slaughter'd Bathỳcles,
Chalcon's much-loved son, whose father resided in Hellas,
Famed, 'mid the Myrmidon race, for prosperity's easy abundance.
Him, as he press'd in pursuit on his rear, unexpectedly, Glaucus,
Turning around, transfixed, through the midst of his chest, with a spear-thrust.
Thunder'd the corpse as it fell :—deep grief seized all of Achaia,
Viewing a hero slain ; and exulted the ranks of the Trojans.
Densely the hostile ranks encircled the corpse ; the Achaians

Thought of their ancient deeds, and still press'd forward in combat.

Then did Meriones slaughter a helmeted chief of the Trojans,
Even a man of valor,—Laogonus, son of Onetor;
Priest of Idæan Zeus, and revered as a God by the people.
Him did the weapon strike, on the cheek, by his ear, and the brave soul
Fled from the fainting limbs, as night overshadow'd his eyeballs.
Then, on the Argive chief, as he moved on, screen'd by his buckler,
Hurtled the Dardan spear—in hopes that a place had been left bare.
But the observant chief was alert, and avoided the jav'lin,
Stooping downward in front; and the long lance, whizzing behind him,
Buried itself in earth; and stood, deep-quivering, earth-bound;
Until the impetus strong had exhausted itself in vibrations.
Thus did the Dardan spear, implanted in earth and abated,
Waste its strength in vain, though a strong arm hurried it onward.
Then, all chafed in soul, spake Ænèas thus, to the Cretan.

"Swift, as thou art, with thy heels, and accomplish'd to play as a dancer,
Had yon spear flown straight, it had made short end of thy capers!"

Then, well skill'd, himself, in the spear, thus retorted the Cretan.

"It were a task too hard, for a man, tho' as mighty as thou art,
Always to quench in battle the ardor of foes who adventure
Into his front in fight.—Remember! thou'rt but a mortal.
I too carry a spear, and should it but happen to hit thee,
Valiant man as thou art, self-confident, too, in the combat,
Mine were the fame of thy fate; and thy soul the possession of Hades."

Thus did the Cretan speak:—him chided the son of Menœtius.

"Merion, gallant chief! what boots it to rail at the foemen?
Trust me, my friend! Troy's troops will never be driven, by hard words,
Off from yonder corpse:—full many a man is to die first.

Words, in the council-chamber; in combat, deeds are effective.
Here, not lengthy harangues, our weapons alone, are decisive."

Thus did Patroclus speak; and he sprang to the front; and the Cretan
Follow'd; and then,—as the clang of the woodcutters rings on a mountain,
Deep from woodland glades, and re-echoes, afar, on the hill-sides,—
Thus, from the wide-spread earth, rose the thundering sounds of the onset:
Clatter of brazen shields, and of bucklers deftly compacted,
Batter'd and hack'd by the swords and the partisans wielded in both hands.
Nor could a man recognise, if he knew him, the corpse of Sarpedon;
Cover'd, as now it was, from the head to the feet, with the spear-shafts
Shiver'd in that fierce fight; and bespatter'd with carnage, and dust-stain'd.
While ever, over the corpse, did the combatants swarm; as, in spring-time,
Flies, though driven away, incessant, in stalls of the cattle,
Swarm at milking-hour, as the white flood foams in the milk-pails.
So, on the Lycian's corpse, did the combatants swarm.—But his fixed gaze
Zeus still kept on the fray, nor averted his radiant eyeballs;
Pondering much in his heart, and revolving the point, and reflecting
Much, on the means, and mode, and time of the death of Patroclus.
Whether, o'erthrown in fight, he at once shall be made to atone for
Great Sarpedon's death, overmaster'd in battle by Hector,
Pierced by hostile spears, and the bright arms torn from his shoulders;
Or whether further foes shall be hurried by him to destruction.
This then at last to the God seems soundest device:—to permit him—
Him, the illustrious friend and attendant of mighty Achilleus—
Once, back again to the town, to repulse Troy's armies, and drive off
Hector's brazen helmet, and offer more lives to the carnage.
Therefore, in Hector's breast he infused an unsoldierly panic;
Mounting, in haste, on his car, he betook him to flight; and exhorted
All Troy's troops to be off—for the scales of Zeus were declining.
Then, nor until then, did the Lycians yield; but their warriors
Gave way, then, in a mass;—for their king lay pierced with a death-wound,
Buried in heaps of slain; and many of them, his defenders,

Lay, piled over the corpse;—in the fray that was heighten'd by great Zeus.
Then were Sarpedon's shoulders despoil'd by his foes of the bright arms,
Glittering all with brass; and these did the son of Menœtius
Give to his trusty attendants to bear, as a spoil, to the galleys.

Then to Apollo thus spake Zeus, great roller of storm-clouds.

"List to me, Phœbus beloved!—descend to the plain; and Sarpedon
Drag from among yon spears, and the dark gore cleanse from the body:
Then, having borne him afar, in the swift stream lave; and anoint him
O'er with ambrosial balm, and clothe him in heavenly vestures.
And, next, give him in charge unto messengers, trusty and swift-wing'd,
Even to Sleep and to Death—the mysterious twins;—who will bear him
Unto his Lycian home, and its broad fields:—there shall his kinsfolk,
Brothers and friends, to his honour, erect a big tumulus o'er him;
Crown'd with a far-seen pillar:—befitting reward of the great dead."

Thus did the Father speak; not unheedingly heard him Apollo.
Swiftly, from Ida's mount, he descends to the field of the carnage;
Drags Sarpedon's corpse from the broken spears that conceal'd it;
Bears it afar from the field, in the swift stream laves, and anoints it
O'er with ambrosial balm, and clothes it in heavenly vestures;
And, next, gives it in charge unto messengers, trusty and swift-wing'd,
Even to Sleep and to Death—the mysterious twins;—and they bear it
Unto his Lycian home, to the rich broad fields of his own land.

Meanwhile, shouting aloud to his driver and steeds, did Patroclus
Press on his flying foes, and was mad with the rapture of combat.
Fool as he was!—had he but given heed to the words of Pelides,
He had escaped, perchance, from the dark fate hovering o'er him.
But the designs of Zeus are ever more potent than man's are.
Zeus, who, e'en as he lists, now troubles with panic the strong man,
Snatching the prize from his grasp;—then again incites him to conquest.
And to Patroclus now gave unnatural ardor for battle.

Who then first that day, who last, fell vanquish'd before thee,
Summon'd, as then thou wert, by the Gods themselves, to destruction?
First fell mighty Adrastus, then Autonous, and Echeclus;
Perimus, Megas' son, and Epistor, and brave Melanippus;
Elesus then went down, and Mulius next, and Pylartes;
All these fell in fight;—and their comrades scatter'd on all sides.

Troy, with her high-built gates, had been storm'd by the sons of Achaia,
Under Patroclus' arm, for he charged up fiercely against her;
Had not her massive wall been surmounted by Phœbus Apollo,
Aiding her vanquish'd host, and threatening fate to her foemen.
Thrice, for the storm of the wall, to its parapet, charged the Achaian:
Thrice his attack was foil'd, and himself dash'd down, as Apollo
Shock'd, with immortal hands, his bright shield; hurling him backward.
But when again—fourth time—like a God, he assaulted the rampart,
Thus, with a terrible shout, spake the far-darting archer, Apollo.

"Cease—Zeus-born as thou art!—deem not to thy weapon, Patroclus!
Troy's proud wall can submit.—It will not be subdued by thy great friend;
Not by Achilleus' self:—and much is he stronger than thou art!"

Such were the words of the God:—and Patroclus heard, and retreated;
Dreading the vengeance deep of the far-darting archer, Apollo.

But in the Scæan gates had Hector halted his war-steeds;
Doubting much, in his mind, if again to re-enter the battle,
Or, in the rampart shelter'd, collect and marshal the people.
While he was yet unresolved, at his side stood Phœbus Apollo;
Stood, in the guise of a chief, even Asius, offspring of Dymas;
Uncle, by mother's side, unto Hector himself; and a brother
By both parents alike, unto Hecuba;—strong as he erst was;
Long, upon Phrygian soil, had he dwelt by the streams of the Sangar.
Bearing the form of him, spake Zeus' bright offspring, Apollo.

"Why, thus, afar from the fight?—This backwardness little befits thee!
Would I were even stronger, as now I am weaker, than thou art!
So that my prowess in war might shame thee back to the battle.
Turn then again, and direct thy horses' heads on Patroclus;
Victor thou yet may'st be;—by assistance, perchance, of Apollo."

Thus did the God exhort;—then mingled again in the combat.
Unto Cebriones then did Hector speak, and command him
Lash once more his steeds to the thick of the fight.—But Apollo
Enter'd the kindling fray, and he troubled the troops of the Argives,
Anxious to swell the renown of Hector himself and the Trojans.
Hector the common troops pass'd carelessly thro', nor assail'd them;
Saving his horses' strength, and directing them full on Patroclus.
While, on the other side, did Patroclus leap from his war-steeds;
Bearing a spear in his left, with his right hand poising a huge stone,
Rugged and gleaming bright, and of bulk overshading his right hand:
Whirling, he sent it aloft; and it flew not afar from the right mark;
Nor was it hurl'd in vain; for the sharp stone struck on the temples
Hector's charioteer:—he was bastard offspring of Priam:—
Son of the famous king:—for, while he was holding the bright reins,
Full on the top of his face came the huge stone,—smashing the eye-brows,
Crushing the solid skull;—and the eyeballs, forced from the sockets,
Fell in the dust at his feet: and himself, as plunges a diver,
Plung'd to the earth from the car: and the fierce soul fled from the carcass.
Loud, as he mark'd his fall, thus, scoffingly, shouted Patroclus.

"Gods! what a nimble man!—How easy that shoot from the chariot!—
Did he but happen to live by the ocean, where fish are abounding,
Many a mouth, through him, might be satisfied,—diving for oysters,
Even in times of storm, from his boat's side taking his headers:
Easy, enough, for one who on land dives thus from his war-steeds.
Who would have thought such tumblers had ever been found 'mid the Trojans?"

Thus did Patroclus speak—then rush'd on the corpse, to despoil it ;
Like the tremendous rush of a lion, clearing the fold-yards ;
Then, with a wound on his breast, by his courage brought to destruction.
Thus, on Cebriones dead, did Patroclus rush to despoil him.
While, on the opposite side, leapt Hector to earth from his war-steeds.
As, on a mountain-peak, two lions, roaring defiance,
Over a slaughter'd stag, all raving and savage with hunger,
Wage unrelenting war for the coveted prize of the carcass ;
So, for Cebriones slain, did these two lords of the battle,
Hector, mighty in war, and Patroclus, son of Menœtius,
Aim at each other's breasts with the points of their murderous weapons.
Hector held by the head to his brother's corpse, and retain'd it :
While, on the dead man's foot, did Patroclus seize :—and, around them,
Deepen'd the roar of fight ; of the Trojan troops, and the Argives.
As, with opposing blasts, when the fury of Eurus and Notus
Falls upon some dense wood ; in a glen, deep down on a hill-side ;
Beech, or tough-grain'd ash, or the long-leaved boughs of the cornel ;
And, as the blast drives over, the tall trees mingle their branches ;
Rasping, and grating together, or breaking, perchance, with a great crash ;—
So, and with equal din, did the armies of Troy and Achaia
Seek each other's breasts :—and fear was forgotten among them.
Over Cebriones' corpse was the clash and the crashing of lances ;
Whizzing of arrow-shafts, that bounded in wrath from the bow-strings ;
Clanging of pond'rous stones, that bruised and batter'd the bucklers
Of those fighting around him.—He, mighty, and mightily stretch'd out,
—Heedless of reins and steeds,—slept sound 'mid the storm of the battle.

For such time as the sun stands high on his path 'mid the heavens,
Falls on each army the storm of the darts, and slain are the people.
But, when the sun stands low, and releases the laboring oxen,
Then, despite of fate, has Achaia the best in the struggle :
Dragging Cebriones off from the spears, in the face of the uproar
Of Troy's baffled host, they strip from his shoulders the armor.
Then, on his foes, once more, in his wild wrath, hurtles Patroclus.

Three times, dreadful as Ares, with terrible shouts, he assails them;
Charging them home:—three times, nine warriors perish before him.
But when, great as a God, he a fourth time charges the phalanx,
This, of thy narrow life, is the finishing effort, Patroclus!
For, thro' the midst of the fray, to assail thee, Phœbus Apollo
Moves;—an unequal opponent:—Patroclus never discerns him:
For, in a pile of cloud, is the Deity veil'd and enshrouded.
Standing in rear of the chief, on his back, 'mid his shoulders, the great God
Strikes, with pond'rous hand.—Swim, dizzy, the eyes of the hero.—
Flies, from his temples, the helm; at the buffet of Phœbus Apollo;
Far, with a clash, to the earth, far away, 'mid the hoofs of the war-steeds,
Rolls that crested helm.—Those bright plumes, waving above it,
Draggle in blood and dust.—They have never been wont to be soil'd so:
Never, before, have dust, and that proud helm, been acquainted;
Used, as it is, to protect in the fight the fair face of a hero,
Even Achilleus' self;—now Zeus upon Hector bestows it,
Gives it to him for a while; as he stands on the brink of destruction.
All, in Patroclus' hand, does the huge spear shiver to splinters;
Stalwart, brass-headed beam, as it is;—and, afar from his shoulders,
Shield, of ample orb, to the earth comes down, with the shield-belt;
And, from his gallant breast, is the corslet loosed by Apollo.
Mind and senses bewildered, his limbs unnerved by the buffet,
Stupid, aghast he remain'd:—as he stood, he was struck by a Dardan,
Right 'mid his shoulder-blades, with a spear from behind; by Euphorbus,
Panthus' gallant son, who headed the youths of his own age,
Both in the use of the spear, and in driving of steeds, and the foot-race.
Twenty, the chiefs, at least, he had tumbled to earth from their war-steeds,
When, with his car and horses, he first took lessons in battle.
This man, thus, with his spear, first wounded the back of Patroclus;
Nor with a fatal wound:—and, at once, from the flesh of the hero,
Tearing the spear, he retreated again to his friends;—nor adventured,
There, to abide such a foe, though unarm'd, in the perilous death-gripe.
He, by the blow of the God and the spear-stroke, stunn'd and enfeebled,

Shunn'd approaching Fate; and retreated again to his comrades.
Hector remarked, from afar, how Patroclus, sorely disabled,
Wounded by hostile steel, and his great soul cow'd, was retreating
Back to the Argive host;—and, cleaving the ranks, overtook him;
Plunging the levell'd spear through his groin, right out on the far side.
Thundering he fell to the earth:—loud, deep, was the wail of Achaia.
Just as a stubborn boar is o'ermaster'd in fight by a lion;
When, on a mountain-peak, they have wrangled in terrible combat,
Round some half-dried spring, which both have been eager to drink of;
Until the lion's might has master'd his snorting opponent:
Thus, having overthrown many foes, the brave son of Menœtius
Yielded at length his own brave soul to the weapon of Hector:
Who, to his fallen foe, thus vauntingly spake, and address'd him.

"Where is the boastful hope thou'st ventured to utter, Patroclus!
Speaking of Troy's wall stormed, and her proud dames carried as captives,
Off, in Achaia's barks, far away to the land of thy fathers?
Fool!—Those dames and wall had protectors ready to guard them;
Hector, and his swift steeds;—steeds, eager for war:—and their master,
First among Troy's fierce sons in the use of the spear;—a defender
Fitted to ward off fate.—But *thou* shalt be prey to the vultures.
Wretch! all brave as he is, not a jot has avail'd thee, Achilleus.
He but urged thee to death; for he charged thee, methinks, when departing,
Thus: 'To the hollow ships do not come again, knightly Patroclus!
Seek not again this face, ere thou tear, from the bosom of Hector,
Corslet and blood-stain'd vest, and bear them as trophies before thee.'
Such were, perchance, his words; and thou, poor fool! wert the victim."

Then, with thy failing breath, thou answeredst, knightly Patroclus!

"It is thy season to boast, and thou boastest enough!—But thy conquest
Comes from Zeus himself, and from Phœbus:—they have subdued me,
Easily—as Gods could;—themselves disarming my shoulders.

If twice ten such as thou had encountered me fairly in battle,
All had sunk in fight; and had bow'd to the brunt of my lance-point.
Fate overthrew me the first:—it is Leto's son who has slain me.
Then came, of men, Euphorbus—and thou comest third in the death-work.
But take heed to my words, and ponder them well, as I speak them!
Know that thyself, proud man! art doom'd not long to survive me!
Death, and relentless fate, are standing already beside thee.
Doom'd, and ere long, to be slain by the hands of the noble Achilleus."

Thus as he spake, came death, with its dark shade, gloomily o'er him.
Flitted the naked soul, from the beautiful body, to Hades;
Wailing its hapless fate, and the vigor and youth it abandon'd.

Then, on his dead foe's corpse, gazed Hector; and thus he address'd it.

"Why, O Patroclus! to *me*, thus utter thy gloomy prediction?
Who can affirm, that Achilles, the son, as he is, of a Goddess,
May not himself lie dead, if my spear-point happen to reach him?"

Thus having spoke, with his heel on the breast of the slain, from the deep wound
Fiercely he wrenched his spear:—and tumbled the corpse on its broad back.
And, with the reeking lance, on Automedon turn'd, to assail him;
Even the martial attendant of him, the swift-footed Pelides;—
Eager to strike him down:—but the swift steeds hurried him onwards:
Steeds of Immortal race; old Peleus' gift from the great Gods.

BOOK THE SEVENTEENTH.

Shows how the battle raged o'er the corpse of the son of Menœtius.

Nor did the death of Patroclus by Trojan hands in the battle
Pass unobserved by the eyes of Atreus' son, Menelaus:
He, through the foremost ranks, sprang forward, gleaming in armor;
Sprang, and protected the corpse; and encircled it round, as a heifer
Circles, with plaintive bellow, her new-dropp'd calfling—her first one.
Circling the corpse of his friend, thus, the auburn-hair'd Menelaus
Mov'd, with rounded shield, and his long lance levell'd before him;
Threatening death to the foeman, whoever may dare to assail it.
Neither was Panthus' son, far-famed for his weapon, forgetful
Of the redoubtable dead;—so he came up right to the body;
Stood, and thus address'd the Ares-loved Menelaus.

"High-born prince, Menelaus, Atrides!—ruler of nations!
Hence from yonder corpse, and leave me the spoils of my prowess!
Know! that I was the first, amid all Troy's armies, and Troy's aids,
I was the first, who in battle implanted a wound in Patroclus.
Let me, then, peacefully win the renown I deserve 'mid the Trojans:
Lest I assail thyself, and thy life take speedily from thee."

Then, all indignant, thus spake the fair Menelaus in answer.

"O Father Zeus! is it well that a man should be ready to vaunt thus?
None of the woodland race,—not the panther, nor tawny-maned lion,
Nor the ferocious boar,—though the animal-courage within them

Quickens their pride of heart,—is so arrogant and overweening,
So well esteems itself, as do these proud issue of Panthus.
Yet, there was one of the race—Hyperenor, tamer of war-steeds—
Found[a] that his youth and strength were in vain when he dared to oppose me;
Meet me with insult foul, and revile as unknown 'mid the Argives;
As but a man of nought:—but his own feet never convey'd him
Back to his well-loved spouse, and the care of his provident parents.
And, as I treated him, thee too will I treat, if thou standest
Longer, thus, in my front:—so, I warn thee be off, while the way's clear,
Back to thy mob of friends, and not play the hero before me;
Lest harm come of the freak!—E'en a fool, when he's hurt, understands it."

Thus did the monarch speak:—but his foe was unmoved, and replied thus.

"Now is the time, indeed, Menelaus! the time for the vengeance
Due for my brother's death, from the boaster who ventures to own it.
Thine is the hand that has widow'd his new-made spouse in her bride-bed:
Thine, which has laid on his parents unceasing weeping and wailing.
Yet, those mourning ones might be comforted in their affliction,
If thine head and armor—my trophies in fight—I could offer
Unto my parents' hands, to the hands of Panthus and Phrontis.
Nor can a feud, such as ours, any longer remain undecided.
It must be fought to the end:—be it victory, be it destruction."

Thus, did the Trojan speak; and he charged, with his spear, on the round shield:
Solid the brass remain'd; for the spear-point turn'd and was blunted
Back, on the buckler's face:—in return, with his weapon, Atrides,
Praying a prayer to Zeus, thrust hard at Euphorbus and smote him,
As he was bearing back;—and struck on the neck, by the key-bone:
And, with nervous arm, enforcing the spear, he propell'd it,
Until the brazen point stood out at the back of the Trojan.

[a] See Il. xiv. v. 516.

Thundering he fell to the earth, and his mail clash'd heavily o'er him.
Dabbled in blood was his hair—that hair, like the locks of the Graces,
Tress'd in curls, and arrayed with gold and with silver adornments.
E'en as an olive-tree, which, clothed with perpetual verdure,
Grown in a lonesome glen, by the side of abundance of waters,
Spreads, in vernal prime, and its top is alive with the breezes,
Waving in every wind, and the white blossoms cover its branches;
Until a sudden storm sweeps down, with the blast of a whirlwind,
Tearing the plant from its roots, and stretching it low on the greensward;
Such, and so fair, on the earth lay the beautiful form of Euphorbus,
Slaughter'd by Atreus' son, as he tore from the body the armor.

As when the savage strength of a lion, rear'd on the mountains,
Bursts on a herd in its pastures, and slaughters the fairest of heifers;
Breaking her smooth sleek neck, and plunging his teeth in the warm flesh;
Rending the panting prey, and lapping the blood and the entrails;
And the affrighted dogs and the herdsmen, safe at a distance,
Urge it, with shouts and yells, to abandon the prey;—but they dare not
Meet it in closer fight; for a terror has fallen upon them:
So, amid all Troy's host, not a champion came who adventured
Boldly to face in the field the redoubtable chief Menelaus.
Then, had the son of Panthus been easily stripp'd of his harness;
Stripp'd by Atrides' hand; but the spoil was begrudged by Apollo:
He, clad in Mentes' form, the redoubted Ciconian chieftain,
Sought out Hector again, in valor the rival of Ares;
And, having found him at last, in winged words he address'd him.

"It is a profitless toil that quest which ye now are pursuing,
Hunting Pelides' steeds:—those steeds which are hard to be master'd
By any mortal hands, and are loath to submit to the guidance
Of any lord but Achilles—the son, as he is, of a Goddess.
All this time Menelaus, the warrior-leader Atrides,
Guarding Patroclus' body, has slaughter'd a prince of the Trojans;
Panthus' issue, Euphorbus; and ended his ardor for battle."

Such were the words of the God : then he mingled again in the combat.
Hector's soul, as he heard, grew dark with a cloud of affliction.
Darting his glance, at once, thro' the ranks of the fight, he discover'd
One man stripping the arms from the limbs of another ;—his foeman,
Stretch'd upon earth, and the blood forth running in streams from the deep wound.
And, at the sight, with a shout, thro' the skirmishers, gleaming in bright brass,
Rush'd to avenge :—and he flash'd where he went, as the blaze of Hephæstus
Burns with quenchless splendor :—his war-shout startled Atrides ;
He, with his own great spirit, indignantly communed, and spake thus.

" Ah ! woe is me, if I fly and abandon the glittering armor,
Also the corpse of Patroclus, who died here, slaughter'd in *my* cause.
Shall I not bear the reproach of what Argive chances to know it ?
While, on the other hand, if I venture, alone, to encounter
Hector, and Troy at his back, one to many, I surely am worsted.
Hector's glancing helm brings all Troy thronging behind it.
But to what purpose thus does my mind raise questions within me ?
Whoso ventures to brave in the battle a friend of the great God,
One who is honor'd by him—he is sure of some heavy disaster.
Therefore, no Danaan ought, though he see me retreat, to reproach me,
Yielding to Hector's force, commission'd of Zeus to assail us.
Yet, if I could but discern the available valor of Ajax,
We two, piercing the fray, would again have a taste of the combat.
And, in despite of the God, we perchance might recover the dead corpse,
Bearing it off to Achilles :—and that were a joy, though a sad one."

Thus as the monarch debated, and held long converse within him,
Nearer, and yet more near, came the Trojan armies, and Hector
Led their van : then back he retreated, leaving his dead friend ;
Yet turn'd oft in retreating :—so turneth a mighty-maned lion,
Driven by dogs and men, and by clamor of voices, and spear-points ;
Leaving the guarded fold ; and his ardor is chill'd in his brave breast,

As, with unwilling pace, he avoids the too wary encampment:
So, from Patroclus', went the auburn-hair'd Menelaus;
Till he arrived in the ranks of his own brave troops, when he turn'd round,
Scanning the ranks of fight, for the great Telamonian Ajax.
Him, did he quickly discern, far away, on the left of the combat;
Cheering the fainting troops, and arousing their courage for battle.
For, 'mid the Argive ranks had a panic been spread by Apollo.
Swiftly he ran to the hero; and, standing beside, he address'd him.

"Ajax, my friend, make haste! let us speed to the corpse of Patroclus:
So that the body, perchance, we may bear to the tent of Achilleus:
Body, alas; nor more; for the arms are the trophies of Hector."

Thus did the monarch speak, and excited the fury of Ajax:
Cleaving the foremost ranks, on he went, with the fair Menelaus.
Hector had seized on Patroclus, collected his arms as a trophy,
And, yet dragging the corpse, was about to dissever the fair head;
Dooming the headless body as food, within Troy, for the wild-dogs[b].
But, ere the deed was done, came Ajax, rearing his broad shield,
Topping the fray as a tower:—and Hector rejoining his comrades,
Gain'd, with a leap, his car;—and the armor he gave his attendants;
Bidding them bear it to Troy, as a proof of his prowess in battle.
Ajax, standing firm, with his broad shield glancing before him,
Cover'd Menœtius' son; as a lion covers his young ones;
Who, in the thicket's depth, are encounter'd, at chance, by the hunters,
Under the old one's care;—and he ramps in the pride of his great strength,
Drawing his eyebrows down, and fearfully shrouding his eyeballs:
Over Patroclus' corpse, thus Ajax stalk'd to the battle:
And by his side was Atrides, the Ares-loved Menelaus;
Standing, resolved to the foe, though deep was his bosom's affliction.

Then did the Lycian chief, great Glaucus, Hippolochus' offspring,

[b] This, and similar passages, are usually overlooked in forming an estimate of Hector's character.

Gloomily gazing on Hector, in harsh words scornfully taunt him.

" Hector, thy form is fair—but thy prowess in battle is waning.
Little thy former fame is befitting a runaway dastard.
Time is it, now, to resolve how the city and state of the Trojans
May be preserved—if at all—by thyself and thy native retainers:
For, not a Lycian more will be ready to combat the Argives;
Striving in cause of Troy:—there is little incentive to fight so.
War, without end or purpose, will cease, at the last, to be grateful.
What is the hope that a man, undistinguish'd in war, can rely on,
E'er to be aided by thee, when a leader renown'd as Sarpedon,
Thine own friend and guest, is relinquish'd, as spoil to the Argives:
One who, alive, many times, had efficiently aided and fought for
Thee and thine; but, dead, is abandon'd at once to the wild-dogs?
Therefore, if any there be of the Lycian troops who obey me,
Home will they march, and leave proud Troy to the fate that awaits her.
Why, even now, as it is, if burn'd in the breasts of the Trojans
That unyielding courage befitting men fighting for country,
Ready to do and dare all things to repel an invader,
Into the town of Troy might we yet drag fallen Patroclus.
And, if it were but thus, if the city of Priam contain'd him,
Dragg'd, all dead as he is, perforce from the heat of the battle;
Then would the Argive host give us freely the arms of Sarpedon;
Give us the king himself[c]; and Ilion's wall might receive him.
For yon corpse[d] was the friend of a man, who—with all his attendants—
Famous in fight, is confest most valorous, far, of the Argives.
But, when Ajax comes, thou'rt strengthless to stand up against him,
Great-hearted chief as he is; his mere looks, scaring thy senses,
Frighten thee off from the battle—as knowing thy better is near thee."

Sternly to Glaucus thus spake Hector, glancing his bright helm.

[c] Glaucus supposes that the body of Sarpedon had been carried to the ships.
[d] That of Patroclus.

"Glaucus, wise as thou art, why utter such arrogant language?
Thee was I wont to esteem,—and—ye Gods!—I have often affirm'd it,—
Soundest in sense of all who are dwellers in Lycia's rich plains.
But these words much incline me to deem thee 'reft of thy senses:
Charging me, thus, with flight from the overgrown valor of Ajax.
Never have I felt dread at the battle, or thunder of war-steeds:
But man's will must bow to the will of the Ægis-wielder,
Zeus, who the man of might now troubles with panic, and snatches
Victory out of his grasp; then urges again to the battle.
But, stand thou at my side, as I enter the fray; and determine
Whether, to-day, I behave as the dastard thou darest to call me.
Or whether some great chief, all hot as he is for the combat,
Will not be driven by me from protecting the corpse of Patroclus."

Thus did the hero speak—then shouted aloud to the Trojans.

"Trojans! Lycians, too! and ye Dardans, famous in close-fight!
Quit ye as men, O friends, and remember your recent achievements.
While I array these limbs in the arms of the mighty Achilleus;
Arms, worn late by Patroclus, now mine by the title of conquest."

Hector aroused them thus; then, swiftly, away from the combat,
Moved, with his glancing helm;—and he soon overtook his attendants,
Not yet far in advance,—for he hastily follow'd behind them,—
Who, to the wall of the city, were bearing the arms of Pelides.
Standing apart from the battle, he changed these arms for his own arms;
Giving his own, in exchange, to the hands of his martial attendants;
Bidding them bear them to Troy:—and he donn'd the celestial armor,
Even Achilleus' armor—that armor presented to Peleus
By the immortal Gods, as a token of love—and in old age
Given by him to his son;—doom'd never to wear them to like age.

Him, as he stood thus clad in the glittering mail of Pelides,
Zeus, cloud-whirling God, from the summit of Ida beholding,

Shook his immortal brows; and pondering spake in his deep breast.

"Ah, wretched man! how little thou thinkest of death as approaching;
Yet how near its approach!—Thou wearest celestial armor,
Of the redoubted chief, whom all men tremble to gaze on.
His great friend thou'st slaughter'd—his stalwart yet gentle companion—
And in unseemly guise hast harried the arms from his shoulders
And from his gallant head.—Yet a moment's glory I give thee;
Hardly won as it is—for the glorious arms of Pelides,
Ne'er, on thy quitting the fight, is Andromache fated to loosen."

Thus did Cronion speak; and his dark brows bow'd, as assenting.
Then, unto Hector's form, was adapted the armor;—and Arès
Enter'd his soul—and infused fresh energy into his strong limbs;
Courage and ardor for fight.—With a terrible clamor, the hero
Came to his bold allies; and he seem'd, unto all who beheld him,
Sheath'd in the glittering arms, none other than mighty Pelides.
Passing along their ranks, each leader and chief he exhorted;
Glaucus, and Mesthles next, Thersilochus also, and Medon;
Asteropæus next, and Hippothous, and Deisenor,
Cromius, Phorcys too, and Ennomus famed as an augur.
These did he rouse to the battle, in wingèd words of incentive.

"Hear me, ye thousand tribes of the brave friends living around us!
Not for the pride of pomp, or to marshal a throng of retainers,
Forth from his native walls have I summon'd each chief to attend me:
But for defence of Troy; as a guard to her wives and her infants:
Trusting your zeal as a check to the martial force of Achaia.
'Tis but for sake of this I diminish the means of my own land;
Feeding and filling you; and pampering you for the combat.
Therefore, let each man face round again to the battle;—regardless
Whether he live or die.—Such are ever the chances of warfare.
Yet do I say, whosoevér can drag but the corpse of Patroclus
Into the Trojan ranks, despite the protection of Ajax,

Half of the spoils are his; one half will I willingly yield him.
And, as the fame of myself, so be his; as for equal achievement."

Thus did the hero speak; and the bristling ranks, on Achaia,
Charged, with outstretched spears. Each thought that himself was the hero
Fated to win yon corpse from the great Telamonian Ajax.
Fools! upon that great corpse how thick shall be heap'd up the dead men!
Ajax, then, spake thus to the valorous chief Menelaus.

"High-born prince, Menelaus! I fear, O friend, for our own selves,
Lest never more we be fated to come away clear from the combat.
Not so much do I dread for the body of fallen Patroclus,
Doom'd, as doubtless it is, to the Trojan vultures and wild-dogs;
As for my own good head, now threaten'd, alas! with disaster:
Mine and thine both alike:—such a war-cloud deepens around us,
Under the guidance of Hector, and only destruction awaits us.
Nevertheless, shout loudly, and summon the chiefs of Achaia."

Thus did the hero speak; and obey'd him the stout Menelaus.
Loudly he shouted for aid to the Danaans, scatter'd around him.

"Friends! whosoever ye be, great leaders and chiefs of the Argives!
Ye who, with Atreus' sons, Agamemnon and Menelaus,
Drink at our feasts of state,—yourselves each a ruler of nations,
Clothed by the hand of Zeus with excellent honor and glory!
Hard task is it for me, 'mid the dust and the blaze of the battle,
Clearly to make out each of the heroes and leaders around me.
But, whosoever is near, let him hasten at once; if he would not
Suffer Patroclus' corpse to be mauled by the dogs of the Trojans."

Such was the monarch's cry:—first heard him Oïlean Ajax.
Running, he traversed the fray, and stood expectant beside him.
Then came the mighty Idomeneus, and, with the king, his attendant
Merion, brave in the fray, and the equal of homicide Arès.

As for the rest, what tongue of mortal man may rehearse them?—
All those sons of Achaia, who brought up the rear of the battle?

Troy charged first, in a mass; and Hector charged in her first rank.
E'en as the ocean-swell, at the mouths of a cloud-gotten river,
Meets the descending waters, and surges in billows against them;
And the adjacent shingle resounds with the wash of the wild waves:
Such was the tumult of Troy as she roll'd to the charge—but Achaia
Stood undismay'd and firm by the corpse of the son of Menœtius,
Serried with brazen bucklers:—and, dimming the gleam of the helmets,
Floated around both armies a blinding mist, which involved them,
Sent from Cronion's self; for he never had hated Patroclus
When yet the living friend and attendant of mighty Achilleus;
And, now dead, was unwilling to leave him a prey to the wild-dogs:
So, to protect his corpse, he incited his martial companions.

Troy, with a first bold rush, bore backward the sons of Achaia,
Forcing them off from the dead;—and though not a man of the Trojans,
Fierce as they were, could stain his spear with the blood of an Argive;
Yet did they seize on the body.—Not long did the sons of Achaia
Yield that vantage-ground: they were rallied to battle by Ajax,
Comeliest chief in form, and the doughtiest too in achievement,
'Mid the Achaian leaders—one only excepted—Pelides:
Right thro' the foremost ranks did he charge;—like the charge of a wild-boar,
Roused on a mountain's side, which bursts with a crash through the thickets,
Scattering baying dogs, and the ranks of adventurous hunters.
Thus, the brave son of his father, the great Telamonian Ajax,
Broke uncheck'd through the armies of Troy, and he scatter'd her phalanx,
All her men of might, who surrounded the corpse of Patroclus,
Eager to drag it away, and to win with it fame and preferment.

One man,—issue renown'd of the mighty Pelasgian Lethus,—

Hippothous, by the foot already was dragging the carcass
Off by a broad buff belt, with which he'd encircled the ankles;
Hoping to thus win favor with Hector and Troy—but disaster
Came to himself—and none of his own friends chanced to avert it;
Ready as each had been: for the great Telamonian chieftain,
Cleaving the crowd, strode up, and shatter'd the side of his head-piece.
Helmet of brass gave way, and was riven apart by the lance-point,
—Huge as the weapon was, and stalwart the arm that impell'd it.
Forth, through the gaping wound, out oozing, the blood and the smash'd brains
Flooded the shaft of the spear: all loosed was his strength; and his slack hand
Quitted Patroclus' foot, and left it to fall to the dank earth,
There to repose:—and himself came down, dead, over the dead-man:
Dead, far away from his home—from the fertile plain of Larissa,
Yielding but little return for his parents' care—for his short span
Ended, untimely reduced by the spear of redoubtable Ajax.

Hector, again, his spear sent wrathfully whizzing at Ajax;
But he avoided the lance;—though narrowly; having observed it
When first thrown—yet the spear struck prostrate a chief of Phocæa,
Schedius, valorous issue of Iphitus; in Panopæus
Ruling, with kinglike sway, over numerous vassals around him.
Under his collar-bone did the lance-point strike; and, beneath it,
Forced its way, right through, at the back, by the base of the blade-bone.
Thundering, he fell to the earth; and his arms clash'd heavily o'er him.
Ajax slew Phorcys, the redoubtable issue of Phœnops,
While he protected the corpse of Hippothous; stabbing him frontwise;
Bursting his hollow armor, and plunging the spear in his entrails.
Headlong he roll'd in blood, and clutch'd at the ground in his death-pang.
Back went the van of Troy, and Hector himself went among them.
And, with exulting shouts, the Achaians, seizing the corpses,
—Phorcys, and mighty Hippothous,—stripp'd from their shoulders the bright arms.

Then, would the men of Troy, by the martial sons of Achaia
Shamefully beaten back, have re-enter'd the walls of their stronghold;
And, by their innate valor, and prowess in war, had the Argives
Won from reluctant Zeus the renown of the fight:—but Apollo,
Even himself, went afar to arouse to the combat Æneas;
Cloth'd in a herald's form, that of Periphas, prudent in council;
Son of an aged father, descending himself into old age.
Liken'd in shape unto him, to the chief thus utter'd Apollo.

"What is the hope that men, such as ye, will be able to rescue
Troy's proud town from her fate?—And yet, in my time, I have known men,
Who have attain'd as much, with scantier forces to aid them;
Trusting to might of mind, and to prowess, and strength in achievement.
Ye, on the other hand, with Zeus ever anxious to give you
Victory over Achaia, are slack and afraid of the battle."

Thus did Apollo speak: and Æneas noted the great God,
Seeing him face unto face; and, lustily, shouted to Hector.

"Hector! and all ye leaders of Troy, and the aids of the Trojan!
Shame, it indeed were now if the valorous sons of Achaia
Drove us, dishonor'd, back, to be cooped up again in the ramparts.
'Tis not an instant since an Immortal, standing beside me,
Told me that Zeus supreme is a helper in battle to aid us.
Then, let us charge, right ahead, on the Danaan ranks, nor allow them,
Thus unimpeded, to bear to the galleys the corpse of Patroclus."

Thus did the hero speak, and he leapt to the front of the vanguard:
And, in his rear, Troy's ranks collected to meet the Achaians.
Then by a thrust of his spear was Leocritus slain by Æneas:
Thy brave friend, Lycomedes! the notable son of Arisbas.
Grief, at his comrade's fall, tormented the brave Lycomedes;
And, pressing on to the foemen, he levell'd and darted his bright spear;
Striking to dust Apasaon Hippasides, shepherd-of-people;

Piercing his liver through by the heart, and loosing his strong knees.
Chieftain was he of the tribes from the rich Pœonian lowlands ;
Next unto Asteropæus in valor and prowess in combat.
Grieved, at his comrade's fall, was the valorous Asteropæus ;
Forward he rush'd, all hot to encounter the foes ;—no achievement
Follow'd :—Achaia's ranks stood resolute, bucklers before them,
Spears far-gleaming in front, as they guarded the corpse of Patroclus.
Aye and anon their ranks were view'd and encouraged by Ajax.
He never suffer'd a man in the rear of the corpse ;—nor allow'd him,
Breaking the line, to engage in the front of the other Achaians ;
But ever dress'd their ranks, for a close struggle over Patroclus.
Such were the sage commands of the terrible chief :—and the fair earth
Lay all moist and dank with the broad blood-stains—and the slain men
Went down in heaps upon all sides ; Trojans, and aids of the Trojan,
And the brave sons of Achaia ;—for these had share in the carnage,
Though far fewer of them went down in the fight ;—for they fail'd not
Each to assist his friends, where the stress of the strife was severest.

Thus, as devouring flame, did the fierce fight burn ; and 'twas doubtful
Whether the sun was safe, and the moon yet shone in the heavens ;
Such was the blinding haze that enveloped the fight, where the bravest
Stood, in close-lock'd ranks, by the corpse of the son of Menœtius.
As for the rest of the Trojans and well-mail'd sons of Achaia,
They, unimpeded, fought in the open light :—and around them
Fell full blaze of sunshine ;—the earth, and the tops of the mountains,
Lay, unshadow'd by cloud.—The foes, there, fought at a distance,
Waging an easy warfare ; and lightly avoided the missiles,
Sent with a random aim.—Far other, the scene in the centre ;
Where, amid clash of armor, and carnage, and darkness, the bravest
Struggled, in doubtful strife.—Yet two brave chieftains remaining—
Chieftains of fame and glory, Antilochus and Thrasymedes—
All unaware of the death of Patroclus ; deem'd him triumphant
Still in the van of war, and pressing the rout of the Trojans.
Yet, with a prescient fear of defeat and of death to their comrades,

Combated far in the flank; for such was the mandate of Nestor,
Sending them forth to the war, from the long black sides of the galleys.

But in the central space, without intermission, the fierce strife
Raged, through day's decline. With the heat of the fight, and the sweat-drops,
Feet, and legs, and knees, of the combatants reek'd:—and the stains reach'd
Even to hands and eyes; as they hurtled together, like madmen,
Over the gallant friend of the swift-footed leader Achilleus.
As when a man gives out to be suppled the hide of a great bull,
Placing it, reeking with oil, in the hands of his trusty retainers;
They, having taken the hide, and form'd in a circle around it,
Supple it, standing apart; and soon is the moisture extracted;
Soon is the oil sunk in; and suppled and stretch'd is the thick hide:
Thus, in contracted space, was Patroclus, backwards and forwards,
Dragg'd by the warring hosts:—by the Trojans, hoping to bear him
Unto the Trojan wall;—and, again, by the sons of Achaia
Seeking the hollow ships.—Right fierce was the bloody contention,
Over the corpse:—not Athène, nor Arès, rouser of nations,
—Though in a hot-blood mood,—had slighted the fray, had they seen it.

Such was the stress of fight, and the struggle of men and of war-steeds
Over Patroclus' corpse, by the mandate of Zeus—but Achilleus
Knew not as yet what fate had befallen his dearest Patroclus.
For, far away from the ships, was the fight fought over the body,
Under the walls of Troy;—while his friend never deem'd him departed;
But that, alive and well, having knock'd at the gates of the Trojan,
Homewards he soon would turn:—for Achilleus never expected
Troy to be storm'd by his friend, without, nor, perhaps, with his own aid.
Many a time, and oft, had he talk'd with his mother, with Thetis;
Learning from her the resolves and the deep resolutions of great Zeus.
One thing, alone, she conceal'd—that evil which now had befallen;
Death unto one who, by far, was the dearest of all his companions.

But, by the side of the corpse, still sounded the clash of the lances:
Still did the foes engage, and the combatants slew and were slaughter'd.
Such exclamations, as this, might be heard 'mid the ranks of Achaia,
"Friends! Let it never be said we were driven, inglorious, backwards
Unto the hollow ships!—Let earth, first, gaping before us,
Swallow us all!—Such doom were a fate more becoming and joyful,
Than to permit Troy's armies to carry the corpse of Patroclus
Unto the Trojan wall; his corpse and our glory together."
While, on the other hand, these cries might be heard 'mid the Trojans,
"Friends! if it must be thus, and if Destiny wills us to perish,
O'er yon corpse, let us die, ere a man turn foot from the combat."
Such was the common cry, as each man cheer'd up his comrades.

Thus did they strive in fight—and thus did the clangor of combat
Rise, with iron din, to the bright sky, rending the æther.
Meanwhile, afar from the fight, the immortal steeds of Achilleus
Wept their fallen lord, from the moment they saw him disabled,
Stretch'd in the dust, and slain by the hand of the murderous Hector.
Vainly Automedon strove—the redoubtable son of Diores—
Strove to induce them to move; now using the lash; now resorting
Unto endearing words, now to curses alike unavailing.
Nor would the steeds move back in retreat to the stream of the Ocean,
Wide Hellespont, nor advance to the war with the other Achaians.
But as a pillar raised on the tomb of a notable hero,
Or of a woman renown'd, stands motionless aye on the same place,
Thus the immortal steeds stood motionless under the war-car;
Bowing their manes to the dust; and the big round drops from their eyelids
Chased one another down, falling warm in the dust; as they grieved for
Their great driver's death:—all disorder'd and soil'd were their bright manes,
Hanging on either side, all neglectedly, over the yoke-band:
Them, as they stood and wept, saw Zeus; and, with pity beholding,
Bow'd his immortal head, and thus inwardly spake his emotion.

"Why, ill-fated steeds! did we ever bestow you on Peleus,
Mortal prince,—yourselves exempted from death and from old-age?
Was it, that ye might share the affliction of sorrowful mortals?
For there is nothing that flies, or that crawls o'er the face of the wide earth,
Nothing of all that lives, more deserving of pity than man is.
But, know this! at least, that Hector, the offspring of Priam,
Never may mount your car.—I, myself, will decline to permit it!
Surely content may he be with the arms he has won, and so brags of?
But, for yourselves, new strength will I give to your knees, and new courage;
So that away from the war ye may carry Automedon homewards,
Safe to the hollow ships;—for again must I honor the Trojans;
Letting them slay their foes, till again in the front of the galleys;
Until the sun shall sink, and darkness solemnly follow."

Thus did the great God speak, and inspired the chargers with new strength;
Down to the earth, at their feet, down-shaking the dust from their bright manes,
Lightly the rapid car did they draw between Troy and Achaia.
And, sore grieved as he was, for his leader, Automedon cheer'd them
On:—and he scatter'd the foe—as a vulture scatters the wild geese.
Easily thus did the chief make his way from the throng of the Trojans;
With like ease wheel'd round, and sallied again through the thick fight.
Many he overtook, but he slaughter'd not those overtaken;
For it was more than the chief thus alone in the car could accomplish,
Both to deliver the spear, and to rein in the strength of the war-steeds.
But his disabled state was discerned by a trusty companion,
Hæmon's valorous issue, Alcimedon, son of Laerces:
Standing in rear of the car, he accosted his friend, and address'd him.

"Which of the Gods can it be, that has taken thine intellect from thee,
Straight away out of thy breast, and proffer'd this perilous counsel,
Urging thee thus, by thyself, to encounter the foes in the first ranks,
All unassisted? For, slain is thy valorous friend, and his bright arms
Glitter as Hector's prize, and he boasts of the mail of Pelides."

Thus in reply to the chief spake Automedon, son of Diores.

"Where can I look for a man, amid all of the sons of Achaia,
Who is, as thou, Alcimedon! able to curb in the fierce steeds
Or to arouse their strength, save Patroclus himself! who was equal
E'en to the Gods while alive;—now the victim of Fate and of dark Death?
Take, then, the scourge at once, and the glittering reins of the chargers;
I will descend from the car, and do battle on foot with the foemen."

Thus did the hero speak: and Alcimedon eagerly leapt up
Into the shining car; and he caught at the scourge and the bright reins.
Meanwhile his comrade alighted. The action was noted by Hector;
And, going near to Æneas, he spake to the chief, and address'd him.

"Counsellor, good in fight, of the brass-mail'd ranks of the Trojans!
I can discover, again, the immortal steeds of Pelides
Showing, anew, in the fight; with but sorry attendants behind them.
Well do I deem, that the steeds by us two may be easily captured,
If thou art willing to try:—for their drivers will scarcely adventure
'Gainst such a joint assault to make head in the struggle of Ares."

Thus did he speak; and assented, the stalwart son of Anchises.
So, did the pair set forth, with bucklers shoulder'd behind them;
Bucklers of stiff bulls' hide, with brass thick beaten above it.
Cromius also went, and the beautiful form of Arètus,
Fair as a God; and they all went forward in confident humor,
Thinking to slaughter the drivers, and seize the high necks of the war-steeds.
Fools as they were, not doom'd without loss to accomplish the march back
Safe from Automedon's front; for the chief, having pray'd unto great Zeus,
Felt his courage revived, and his dark soul fully determined;
Turning, he thus address'd, and admonish'd, his trusty companion.

"Let not the steeds be away, and afar if I need their assistance;
But, on the back of my neck, let the hot breath fall—for 'tis Hector,
Priam's son, comes on; who, I think, will persist in his onset,
Until he either mounts on the fair-coated steeds of Achilleus,
Slaughtering you and myself, and affrightens the host of the Argives;
Or in the foremost ranks pays his life as the price of his boldness."

Speaking, he shouted aloud to Atrides, and both the Ajaces.

"Chiefs of the Argive host! ye Ajaces! and thou, Menelaus!
Leave yon corpse for awhile,—our bravest are serried about it,
Men who are able to guard it, and baffle the ranks of assailants;
Rather, give heed and avert from us living, approaching destruction.
For, through the tearful war, great chieftains are coming against us,
Hector and mighty Æneas, of all Troy's heroes the bravest.
But the result of the struggle is yet in the lap of the great Gods:
I but impel this spear, and the issue dependeth on high Zeus."

Speaking, he levell'd and hurl'd the far-shadowing length of his jav'lin.
Fiercely the weapon struck on the circular shield of Arètus;
Nor was the spear-point stay'd, but it drove thro' the folds of the buckler;
Piercing his belt of mail, and implanted deep in his entrails.
As when a stalwart youth, right craftily wielding a pole-axe,
Strikes from behind, 'mid the horns, on the brow of a bull; and dissevers
Skull and all; and the beast springs forward, and falls in the death-pang:
Thus, first forward sprang, and then fell backward, Arètus;
As in his entrails quiver'd the long spear, loosing his strong limbs.
Hector then, in return, at Automedon darted his bright spear;
But the observant chief was alert, and avoided the jav'lin,
Stooping downward in front; and the long lance, whizzing behind him,
Buried itself in earth; and stood, deep-quivering, earth-bound;
Until the impetus strong had exhausted itself in vibrations.

Then, with clashing swords, had the chiefs met in sterner encounter,
Hand unto hand in fight; but, fiercely, came in the Ajaces,
Bursting the press right apart, in reply to the call of their comrade.
And, at the sight of them, even Hector, declining the combat,
Went with Æneas back, and with Chromius, fair as Immortals;
Leaving Arètus behind, unavenged, with the lance in his entrails;
Wallowing there in his gore:—but Automedon, valiant as Arès,
Stripping his shining armor, thus boasted exultingly o'er him.

"Some little solace, at least, have I gain'd for the death of Patroclus:
Slaying a man in return, tho' the substitute be but a poor one."

Speaking, he placed his spoils, all dripping with blood, on the chariot:
Then he himself ascended:—his hands, and his feet underneath him,
Bloody, as e'er is a lion that rises from gorging a great bull.

Once yet again did the fight rage fearfully over Patroclus;
Stern and tearful strife:—and it now was aroused by Athenè,
Gliding to earth from the sky—for the broad-brow'd Zeus had despatch'd her,
Unto the Danaan host, for already his purpose was changing.
Just as the gleaming bow, which Zeus, high aloft in the heavens,
Sets, as a sign unto man, as a token of battle impending;
Or of a chilling frost, of a frost that will bind in its fetters
Man's unfinish'd works, and accumulate ills on the sheep-folds:
So, did the Goddess glide, in the form of a luminous Iris,
To the Achaian host; and excited each leader among them.
First of the host, she address'd, and in terms of incentive, Atrides,
Even the stout Menelaus; and spake while standing beside him;
Liken'd, in face and form, to the ancient champion, Phœnix.

"Surely, to thee, at least, 'twere a cause of reproach and dejection,
Atreus' son! if the corpse of Achilleus' trusty companion,
Under the walls of Troy, were to lie as the food of the wild-dogs!

On to the strife thyself, and awaken the people around thee!"

Then spake thus, in reply, the redoubtable chief, Menelaus.

"Phœnix! friend and guide—though ancient in age!—if Athenè
Gave to me strength for fight, and averted the javelins from me,
Cheerfully, then, would I stand in the battle, and fight for Patroclus.
For, to my inmost soul, has his death been a grievous affliction.
But, more fierce than flame, is the prowess of Hector:—his weapon
Never is still:—great Zeus so accumulates glory upon him."

Thus did he speak: and his words were acceptable all to Athenè:
Pleased that the monarch thus had invoked her, first among all Gods.
Vigor she suddenly gave to his arms, and his shoulders, and knee-joints:
And, in his bosom, breath'd the untiring strength of the gad-fly,
Which, oft driven away, renews its attack, and infixes
Ever its beak in man—for sweet, to its palate, is man's blood.
Such, the pugnacious vigor the Goddess infused in his stern soul.
So, he approach'd to the corpse, and he darted his spear near Patroclus.
There was a man in the ranks of the Trojans, son of Eëtion;
Wealthy, and brave in fight; named Podes; friend unto Hector,
Dearest to him of the people, his comrade, and table-companion.
Him, on his broider'd belt, as he turn'd to escape, did Atrides
Strike, with the bright spear-point; and the lance went thro' to the far-side.
Thunder'd his arms as he fell: and Atreus' son, Menelaus,
Dragg'd, from the ranks of the Trojans, the body away to his own men.

Hector the while to the fight was incited again by Apollo,
Standing by side of the chief—like to Asius, issue of Phœnops;
Dearest of all his guests; and who dwelt, when at home, at Abydos.
Like unto him in form, thus spake the far-darter, Apollo.

"Who, 'mid Achaia's host, will, in future, tremble before thee?

Thee, now shrinking away from Atrides ; wont to be reckon'd
Not of the sternest stuff as a warrior[e] ?—Now, from the Trojans,
He by himself drags off, and has slaughter'd, thy trusty companion ;
Known in the van of fight—even Podes, son of Eëtion."

Dark grief swept, at his words, like a cloud, o'er the bosom of Hector.
Right thro' the foremost ranks, did he hasten, resplendent in bright brass.
Then, did Cronïon raise up the orb of the terrible Ægis,
Heavily skirted, and roll'd black clouds on the summit of Ida :
Quick, as he brandish'd the shield, came the flash, and the roll of the thunder ;
Victory bearing to Troy, panic-fear to the hosts of Achaia.

First, the Bœotian leader, Peneleus, quitted the combat ;
Struck, with a grazing wound, on the top of his shoulder—the jav'lin
Thrown, and at quarters close, by Polydamas happen'd to strike him
As he confronted the foe ; and it plough'd thro' the flesh to the bare-bone.
Hector, in combat close, sore wounded Alectryon's offspring,
Leitus, piercing his hand, and quenching his ardor for combat :
Gazing in terror, he fled, for he knew that his strength was departed ;
Knew, that his spear, no more, would be felt 'mid the ranks of the Trojans.
Crete's proud monarch at Hector, as fiercely he rush'd upon Leitus,
Struck, by the top of his breast, on his cuirass :—snapping asunder,
Broke away, close to the socket, the long spear-shaft—and the Trojans
Shouted aloud.—In return, at Idomeneus, darted the Trojan ;
Standing aloft on his car ; and the spear went close ; but it miss'd him :
Yet, in his stead, to the dust, levell'd Cœranus, Merion's servant ;
Driver, too, of his steeds : he had follow'd his master from Lyctum :
And that master,—who first march'd forth upon foot from the galleys,—
Far from the fleet had died, thus swelling the fame of the Trojans ;
Had not his charioteer driven hastily forward the swift steeds ;
Bearing light to his lord, and a rescue from threaten'd destruction ;

[e] Qy. Anglicè, "a carpet-knight."

Death to himself, in return, at the hand of the homicide Hector:—
Hector, who struck his face 'mid the jaw and the ear; thro' the white teeth,
Far back, traversed the spear; and divided the tongue in the middle.
Headlong he fell from the car, on the earth lay scatter'd the bright reins:
Them, once again in his hands, did Meriones, stooping him earthward,
Gather, and thus to Idomeneus, hastily spoke, and address'd him.

"Handle the scourge! nor desist ere we come to the sides of the galleys.
Thou thyself art sure, that Achaia's strength is departed."

Thus did he speak;—and the king,—for a panic fell on his great mind,—
Plying the scourge, to the galleys directed his beautiful war-steeds.

Nor did the will of Zeus, intervening again for the Trojans,
'Scape the two mighty Ajaces, or Atreus' son, Menelaus.
First, to his fellows thus, spake the great Telamonian Ajax.

"Friends! any man may discover, tho' blest with but little discernment,
How great Father Zeus himself takes part with the Trojans;
All their spears fly straight, and arrive at the mark;—be the throwers
Weaklings or men of might;—Zeus equally guides and directs them.
While our spears to the ground fall innocent, and unavailing.
But let us take good heed, and arrive at the best resolution;
Out of the battle to bear yon corpse, and, by speedy returning
Back from the fight, give joy to the bosoms of trusty companions;
Who, with eyes hard strain'd, are regarding the fight, and asserting
Hector's unmatch'd force,—that the strength of his murderous right hand,
Never will meet with a check, but fall yet again on the galleys.
Would! that a man were present to carry in haste to Pelides,
—For not as yet, I suppose, has the mournful intelligence reach'd him,—
News of the death in fight of his loved and his trusty attendant.
But such a man, amid all of Achaia's host, I discern not:
Such is the blinding mist that envelopes the men and the war-steeds.
Oh! Father Zeus! clear off this mist from the ranks of Achaia!

Give us the light of day, and the blessing of sight to our eyeballs.
Slay us!—if such be thy will;—but let us be slain in the daylight!"

Thus did he speak, with tears; and the Father, relentingly, heard him.
Parted the gloom at once, and divided the veil of the vapors.
Out came the glorious sun, and the fight lay open around him.
Ajax then spake aloud to the valorous chief Menelaus.

"Look all around, Menelaus, if now thine eyes can distinguish,
If he be yet surviving, Antilochus, offspring of Nestor.
If so, send him in haste from the fight to the mighty Achilleus,
Bearing the mournful news of the death of his dearest companion."

Thus did he speak, and his words were obey'd by the stout Menelaus.
And he prepared to depart, as a lion abandons the fold-yard,
Driven by baying dogs, and the hands of adventurous herdsmen;
Who, with midnight watch, surrounding the fold, intercept him
From his accustom'd prey:—and the beast, though raging with hunger,
Springs, but springs in vain;—for the bright spears, whizzing around him,
Driven by stalwart hands, and the blaze of the smouldering torches,
Hurl'd in his front, strike terror, all fierce as he is, to his great heart:
So, with the coming dawn he retreats, in the fury of famine;
Thus, from Patroclus' side, the redoubtable chief Menelaus
Moved, full loath at heart:—for he dreaded the sons of Achaia,
Yielding to panic-fear, might abandon the corpse to the foemen.
Much he exhorted Meriones, much the two mighty Ajaces;
"Friends!" he exclaim'd, "great chiefs, and leaders in fight, of the Argives!
Let each chieftain recall the benevolent mind of Patroclus;
Think how good, how kind, how affable, all of us found him,
While he was yet in life:—now, alas, there is only his dead corpse!"

With such words on his tongue forth started the fair Menelaus;
Glancing on every side, as an eagle—said to be keenest
Of all birds that fly over earth in the range of its vision;

Even the timid hare, low-crouching in leafiest covert,
Cannot elude its gaze, as it soars upon high; but the great bird
Swoops, from the clouds, to the prey; and takes the life speedily from it:
Thus didst thou, Menelaus! thy bright eyes flashing around thee,
Traverse the ranks, aye looking around 'mid thy trusty companions,
Searching for Nestor's son, if perchance he were still of the living.
Soon he discover'd the youth, far away, on the left of the combat;
Cheering his troops to the fight, and urging them on to the battle.
Standing close to his side, thus utter'd the fair Menelaus.

"I have a message to give thee, Antilochus! Listen and hear it!
Message, of grief and woe.—Would Heaven! it never were needed!
Thine own eyes have seen and discern'd, if I do not mistake much,
With what a fatal turn has the God roll'd woe on the Argives,
Victory unto Troy.—We have also to mourn for our bravest,
Even Patroclus' self:—and great is the wail of Achaia!
Hie then, in haste, to the fleet, with the terrible news to Achilleus:
That he may hasten his aid to recover the corpse of his dead friend;
Corpse—and naked, alas!—for his armor is forfeit to Hector."

Thus did the hero speak;—and Antilochus, wholly astounded,
Stood, not speaking a word; but the big drops rapidly gather'd,
Filling his swimming eyes; and his voice became choked by emotion.
Yet, in his grief, he forgot not the charge of the good Menelaus;
But he prepared to depart, and his armor he gave to a comrade,
Even to gallant Laodocus, driving his chargers beside him.
Then, tho' he wept as he ran, did his feet move swiftly from battle;
Bearing a tale of woe to the ear of the mighty Achilleus.

Nor did thine anxious mind—Zeus-born Menelaus!—determine
There to remain, and aid, in the battle, the Pylian levies,
Sore distressed as they were, and in grief for Antilochus' absence.
But he committed the ranks to the charge of the brave Thrasymedes;
While he himself, going back to the side of the corpse of Patroclus,

Ran, till he met the Ajaces, and hastily thus he address'd them.

"I have already despatch'd him, in haste to the sides of the galleys;
Unto the tent of Achilles, the swift-footed chief:—but, I deem not,
He will arrive, in aid, howsoever excited at Hector:
Nor, unarm'd as he is, were he able to fight with the Trojans.
So, let us counsel well, and resolve upon what may avail us,
Both to retrieve yon corpse from the grasp of the foe, and our own selves,
Safe from the face of Troy, to redeem from destruction and dark death."

Spake, in reply to the monarch, the great Telamonian Ajax.

"All that thy mouth has spoken is perfect, renown'd Menelaus!
Then, do thou thyself, and Meriones—using your best speed—
Raise up the corpse, and bear it away from the strife!—and, behind you,
We will repel, in the rear, all the fury of Troy and of Hector:
Fellows we are in name, and united in valorous daring:
Not unaccustom'd to wait, side by side, for the onset of Arès."

Thus did the hero speak; and the two chiefs lifted the dead corpse
High from the blood-stain'd earth.—Wild shouted the throng of the Trojans,
Wrathfully, seeing the dead thus moved by the sons of Achaia:
Onward they dash'd in pursuit; as the boar-hounds dash on a wild-boar
Wounded by casual spear, in the front of adventurous hunters;
Eager to rend their prey, while pressing the chace, as pursuers;
But, if the beast turns round, and is driven to bay, then, the false dogs
Slink off, fearing his tusks; and hound tumbles over the next hound;
Thus did the ranks of Troy follow, crowdingly, after the Argives;
Striking with great broadswords, and with partisans wielded in both hands;
But when, turning around, the Ajaces fronted and faced them,
All their color fled from each whitening visage;—and no man
Ventured to lead on a charge, or to hazard a blow for the carcass.

Thus, with stern resolution, they carried their dead from the battle,

Unto the hollow ships ;—and behind, as a great conflagration,
Came up the roaring fight ;—as the roar of the flames, when the fierce blaze
Wastes some populous town ; and beneath it, the roofs of the dwellings
Sink in one great glare ; as its fury is fann'd by the tempest :
Thus, in the rear of the chiefs who were bearing the corpse of Patroclus,
Follow'd the wild uproar of Troy's men-at-arms, and her war-steeds.
And, as a pair of mules, exerting their strength to the utmost,
Drag, from a mountain's side, by a rugged and difficult pathway,
Beam, or trunk of a tree well adapted for ships ; and their courage
Fails, as, reeling they go, deep-sweating and laboring, downwards :
Thus did the two brave chiefs labor under the corpse ; and behind them,
Stemming the foe, the Ajaces stood ; like a prominent headland
Cover'd with waving woods ; which, projecting afar on the lowlands,
Breaks the descending force of a wild stream, driving it outwards
To the accustom'd place, on the wide broad plain, and assigns it
Fitting course and scope, as it surges in vain on the great bank :
So, in the rear of the fight, the Ajaces stood as a buttress,
Breaking the rush of Troy :—and none was bolder in onset
Than were Anchises' son, and his leader the valorous Hector.
And, as a flock of daws, or a flight of the garrulous starlings,
Utter a scream, and fly, when they suddenly look on a falcon
Swooping adown, prepared for pursuit and for slaughter of small-birds ;
Thus, from the face of Æneas and Hector, the sons of Achaia
Fled, with cry of terror—forgotten the joy of the combat.
Many the shining arms then abandon'd and lost in the deep trench,
Left by the flying troops :—and the battle yet raged unabated.

BOOK THE EIGHTEENTH.

Thetis bears to Achilles the armor wrought by Hephæstus.

Thus, did the fight burn on, like the blaze of a great conflagration.
At full speed, meanwhile, ran Antilochus, seeking Achilleus:
Nor was it long, ere he found him, in front of the high-beak'd galleys,
Fill'd with a heavy foreboding of evils already accomplish'd;
While, with mind disturb'd, he was communing thus with his great heart.

"What is the meaning of this, that the long-hair'd sons of Achaia,
Over the plain, to the ships, are retreating again in confusion?
Is it, the Gods have already inflicted the heavy disaster
Spoken of, once, by my mother; who said that my bravest attendant
'Mid the redoubted ranks of the Myrmidons, should, in my own life,
Perish from light of day, and be slain by the hands of the Trojans?
Surely, the man is dead, and none other than mighty Patroclus!
Cruel! to slight my command! for I charged him, having extinguish'd
Hostile flames, to return, nor to brave an encounter with Hector."

While he debated thus, and was communing deep with his own mind,
Close to his side came up thine issue, redoubtable Nestor!
Shedding the warm fast tears:—and he utter'd a sorrowful message.

"Woe to me, Peleus' son!—I am come with a message of evil;
Grievous to hear or relate:—would, Heaven! it never were utter'd!
Dead is Patroclus!—Around his body the battle is raging:
Naked body, alas!—for his armor is carried by Hector."

Thus did he speak—sorrow swept in a dark cloud over Achilleus.
Both hands clutch'd from the hearth the defiling ashes, and pour'd them
Over his graceful head, and besprinkled his beautiful features.
And on his scented robe did the black ash lie, and defile it.
And his majestic form in the dark dust, huge and majestic,
Lay outstretch'd;—with his hands from his fair head rending the bright locks.
All those female slaves, whom the arms of himself and Patroclus
Erst had won in fight, rush'd wailing in deep lamentation
Forth from the doors of the tent, and they ran and encircled Achilleus;
Beating their tender breasts, and fainting in sorrow around him.
While, on the other side, was Antilochus, silently weeping;
Holding the hands of Achilles—for much did he dread, in his great heart,
Fearing the hero's sword might be turn'd in his grief to his own throat.
Heavy and deep were his groans:—and they came to the ear of his mother;
Low in the ocean-depths, as she sat by the side of her father.
And, with a cry of grief, she replied to her son:—and around her
Gather'd the Ocean-Nymphs;—all the Nereids haunting the deep sea.
Glauce was there:—and there was Cymodoce too, and Thaleia;
Spio, and Cymothoe; and Alia too, with her large eyes;
Thoe was there and Nysæa, Athæa and Limnoræa;
Jaira, Melite fair, Amphithoe too, and Agaua;
Doto, Proto fair, Dynamene too, and Pherusa;
Dexaminè, and Amphinomè, and Callianeira;
Doris, Panope too, and thy beautiful form, Galatea!
Nemestes, and Apseudes, and Callianassa;
Clymene too was there, Ianeira, and Ianassa;
Mæra, and Orethæa, and beautiful-tress'd Amathæa[a];
These, and the others were there of the Nereids haunting the sea-depths:

[a] It is impossible (see Preface), in so close an enumeration of proper names, to avoid entirely the Greek accentuation.

Filling the lucid space of the deep sea-cave—and their bosoms
Sadly they beat, as Thetis began in her strain of lamenting.

" Hear me, my sister Nymphs ! all ye Nereids, listen, and hear me !
So may ye know what sorrows afflict your disconsolate sister.
Woe for myself !—I have borne a renown'd but unfortunate offspring :
Borne a redoubted son : he was valorous, perfect in all things ;
Prince among mortal heroes ; and flourishing e'en as a sapling :
Nurtured and reared by myself ; as a young plant rear'd in an orchard ;
And in his high-beak'd ships I despatched him, in arms, to the Troad,
Unto the war with Troy.—But I never, again, may receive him
Back to his native land, to the doors of the palace of Peleus.
And, while I have him alive, and he yet is beholding the sunshine,
Wasting grief is his ;—and I cannot, if present, relieve it.
Yet will I go, and again see my own dear child ; and will hearken
Unto the grief that afflicts him ; though now far away from the battle."

Thus, did the Goddess speak ; and she went from the cave ; and around her
Cluster'd her sister Nymphs :—all weeping ;—the wave of the blue sea
Parted, to yield them a way ; and they rose to the shores of the Troad ;
And up the bare sea-beach left the waves in a line ;—where the galleys
Of his redoubted troops, stood thick by the ship of Achilleus.
Him—as he lay deep-groaning—his Goddess-mother, beside him
Stood, and, with wailing cry, put her hand on the head of her dear son ;
And, in wingèd accents, of sympathy, spake and address'd him.

" Why, thus, weeping, my son ?—what, now, is thy cause of affliction ?
Tell me, nor keep it conceal'd !—Surely, Zeus has, already, accomplish'd
All thou'st pray'd him to do ;—wide-spreading thy hands in entreaty !
Begging him drive to the ships, in confusion, the sons of Achaia ;
There to endure great ills, when deprived of thy mighty protection !"

Then, with a deep-drawn groan, spake the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Yes, mother mine! it is true:—the Olympian truly has done it!
But, what pleasure have I, in the end I have gain'd?—when Patroclus,
Dearly-beloved, lies dead?—whom I honor'd and loved above all men;
E'en as my own dear life?—I have lost him for ever,—and Hector
Carries the massive arms he has stripp'd from the body:—the bright arms,
Wondrous fair, by the Gods as a present bestow'd upon Peleus,
On that fatal day when they gave thee as bride to a mortal.
Better, by far, to have dwelt, with the rest of thy sisters, the Sea-Nymphs,
Deathless;—and Peleus' self to have chosen a mortal to wed with!
Now, ten thousand griefs will weigh on thy mind, and oppress thee:
Weeping thy perishing son:—doom'd never again to receive him
Back to his native land:—and my own heart ceases to wish for
Life, or to longer abide amid men upon earth.—If but Hector,
Stretch'd by my spear in the dust, might first atone with his own life;
Yielding a scanty revenge for the death of the son of Menœtius!"

Then to her son, yet again, and in tears, spake Thetis in answer.

"If it be, e'en as thou sayest, then short is the time I retain thee!
Soon as Hector dies, stands dark fate ready to clutch thee!"

Answer'd, in wrathful pride, then the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Would, I were dead this instant!—Afar from my dearest companion,
I was unable to help him.—He died far away from his own land;
And, dying, thought upon me:—and he needed my arm to protect him.
So—as I never again can return to the shores of my fathers;
Since to Patroclus' self, and the rest of my friends who are slaughter'd
—Slaughter'd by Hector's hands—I afforded no light in their darkness;
Since, by the hollow ships, I am sitting, an idle incumbrance,
Uselessly burthening earth,—and if known 'mid the mailèd Achaians
As unapproach'd in fight—yet am weaker than many in council—
Let me——But first let strife bid her last both to Gods and to mortals:
Strife and headstrong rage, which bewilder the wisest among us;

Which, far sweeter to men than the honeycomb dropping in sweetness,
Enter the human mind, and cloud, as a vapor, the judgment:
Thus was I driven to rage by the king of men, Agamemnon:
But let us, grieved as we are, put the past on one side, and determine
Anger in mortal breasts, and perforce the dear luxury yield up.
So am I off in pursuit of the man who has slaughter'd my comrade;
Hector:—and then for myself let Fate come e'en as it may come:
When Zeus wishes me dead, and the rest of the Gods, the Immortals.
Not of Heracles' self was the great strength able to save him,
Son as he was of Zeus, and beloved above all of his offspring:
Herè's constant wrath, and Fate, were sufficient to tame him.
So, too, at last, must I, when Fate so orders and wills it,
Yield to the stroke of death.—But fame may I win in the meantime.
Surely, some Dardan widow—some deep-bosom'd dame of the Trojans—
Tearing, with frantic hand, at her visage, and rending her fair cheeks,
May find cause, in myself, for a deep lamentation and weeping!
May understand I have ended my weary refraining from battle!
Keep me, no longer, from fight—nor attempt to dissuade me!—Thou canst not!"

Spake to her son, in reply, then the Goddess, whose feet are as silver.

"It is a blameless wish, and I seek not, son! to dissuade thee,
From thy resolve to avert from thy comrades the fate that awaits them.
But for the beauteous arms, thou'st formerly worn, they are shining
Now, upon Trojan shoulders—and Hector himself, with his bright crest,
Brags of the glorious prize; though short is his term of enjoyment;
Soon will his vaunting cease—for destruction is imminent o'er him.
But, do not venture, thyself, to re-enter the broil of the battle,
Ere I arrive once more; and thine own eyes clearly behold me:
For, by to-morrow's dawn, will I come, at the instant of sunrise,
Bearing a glittering harness, a present from kingly Hephæstus."

Thus, did the Goddess speak, and departed again from her dear son:

And, to her sister Nymphs, thus, turning around, she address'd them.

"Go ye, again, and re-enter the fair broad breast of the blue sea!
Go, to the Father's palace, and speak to the ancient of Ocean.
Tell him the things ye have seen:—while I, to the range of Olympus,
Pass: for I purpose to visit the wonderful artist, Hephæstus;
Begging from him, for my son, fair arms of celestial brightness."

Thus, as the Goddess spake, did her sisters dive in the sea-wave:
Then, to the heights of Olympus, did Thetis, whose feet are as silver,
Rise, on behalf of her son, to procure him the armor resplendent.

She, to the heights of Olympus, was rapidly borne.—The Achaians
Pass'd in retreat, meanwhile, to the Hellespont's shore, and the galleys,
With an unearthly din, from the face of the homicide Hector.
Nor, from the storm of spears, had the well-mail'd sons of Achaia
Carried the corpse of Patroclus, the friend of the mighty Achilleus;
Such the renew'd pursuit,—so hot, foot and horse, the pursuers;
Hector himself in the front—not fiercer the blast of a bright flame.
Thrice, by the heel of the foot, was the dead corpse grappled by Hector,
Eager to bear it off; and he terribly cheer'd to the Trojans.
Thrice, in impetuous valor and prowess array'd, the Ajaces
Dash'd him, reeling away, from Patroclus' feet:—but, undaunted,
Still he renew'd the assault;—or he, now, stood firm at a distance,
Cheering his men to attack;—but the body he never relinquish'd.
Just as the herdsmen's bands are unable a tawny-skinn'd lion—
Raging with pangs of hunger—to drive far away from a carcass;
So, in their armëd might, the Ajaces' valor avail'd not
Hector, the son of Priam, to frighten away from Patroclus.
And, he had master'd the corpse, and, with it, ineffable glory,
If, to the mighty Pelides, a messenger, swift as the breezes,
Had not descended, unknown both to Zeus and the rest of the great Gods,
Far from Olympus' top;—it was Iris, mission'd by Herè—
Bidding the hero arm;—and she rapidly spake, and address'd him.

"Peleus' son! Rise up; far-renown'd, as thou art, above all men!
Rise, and deliver Patroclus!—for, over his body, the war-shout
Echoes, in front of the galleys,—and men fall slaughter'd around him;
They who have given their lives in defence of the corpse; and the foe-men,
Troy's exulting troops, who to Ilion, swept by the breezes,
Covet to bear it away:—and the fiercest among them is Hector,
Seeking to master the corpse;—and already, in thought, he has severed
That fair head from the neck;—and has set it on high, and impaled it[b].
Up now; rise and be doing!—Impiety deem it, to leave thus
Fallen Patroclus' corpse, to be maul'd by the dogs of the Trojans.
Insult done to the dead, were an insult done to thine own fame!"

Then, in reply to the Goddess, the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Iris! which of the Gods has sent thee here, to address me?"

Thus, to the chief, in reply, spake Iris, swift as the breezes.

"Herè sent me to earth,—the majestic consort of great Zeus.
But neither high-throned Zeus, nor another of all the Immortals,
Knew it: of all who dwell 'neath the range of the snowy Olympus."

Then, in reply to the Goddess, the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"How can I enter the combat?—My armor is held by the foes, there!—
Even my mother dear has forbidden my arming for battle,
Until again she arrive, and my own eyes see and behold her;
For she has vow'd, from Hephæstus, to bring me a beautiful harness.
Nor do I know of a man, whose armor, if ready, would suit me;—
Only the massive shield of the great Telamonian Ajax;
And that is wielded, methinks, by the chieftain himself, in the front ranks,

[b] See note, *suprà*, Il. xvi. v. 127.

Spear in hand, still heaping the slain over fallen Patroclus."

Then, in reply to the chief, utter'd Iris, swift as the breezes.

"Well do we know, ourselves, that thy armor is held by the foemen.
But, as thou art, go forth to the trench, and appear to the Trojans!
At the mere sight, will the foes, in a panic, relax from the onset:
Giving a breathing-time to the martial sons of Achaia;
Harass'd in sooth by the battle:—a short relaxation from combat."

Thus, as she spake, yet again to the sky rose swift-footed Iris.
Then from the earth stood erected the Zeus-loved hero:—Athène
Spread on his stalwart shoulders the deep-fringed terrible Ægis:
And on his head there descended a luminous cloud, from the Goddess;
Like to transparent gold;—and it rose from his brows as a bright flame.
As when a column of smoke from a town-wall mounts in the æther,
From some distant isle, which is compass'd around by her foemen;
So long as day-light lasts, do the citizens, guarding the bulwarks,
Mingle in hateful strife:—but at even, at time of the sunset,
Glimmer the balefires thick—and, with flashes illumined, the smoke-cloud
Blazes afar to the sky, as a sign to the dwellers around them;
Bidding them come with their galleys, to fight in defence of the townsmen:
Such, on Achilleus' head, was the blaze of the bright coruscations;
As, going out from the wall, he approach'd to the trench:—intermingling
Not with Achaia's ranks:—for he heeded his mother's commandment.
There did he stand, and shout:—and the shout was, by Pallas Athène,
Aided.—The hosts of Troy were assail'd by unspeakable panic,
At the tremendous summons;—for, high as the voice of a trumpet
Calls encircling foes of a town to the storm of her ramparts,
Rose, and as clear and loud, the tremendous voice of Achilleus.
As for the foes, at the sound of the brazen voice of Pelides,
All were amazed and confounded:—the chargers, suddenly wheeling,
Turn'd unto flight their cars; in a heavy foreboding of evil.

Nor less afraid were the drivers, beholding the fearful effulgence,
Which, as a fiery cloud, burnt bright on the brows of Pelides,
With a mysterious splendor—a splendor derived from Athenè.
Thrice, from the trench's brink, loud shouted the noble Achilleus.
Thrice, in disorder, recoil'd Troy's troops, and the aids of the Trojan.
Twelve of the bravest died, self-slain in the rout and confusion,
Slain by their own bright spears, or crush'd by the cars:—the Achaians,
Gladly, the while, drew away from the weapons the corpse of Patroclus;
And on a couch arranged it:—the ranks of his chosen attendants,
Stood quick-weeping around;—and amid them the mighty Achilleus,
Shedding the hot fast tears; as he gazed on the form of his dear friend
Stretch'd on his burial bier; and the body all mangled by spear-wounds.
Him, he had sent, so lately, with men, and with steeds, and with war-cars,
Proudly away to the war:—doom'd never to greet him returning.

Now, the unwearied Sun, at the bidding of beautiful Herè,
Slow and reluctant, sank from the Earth to the streams of the Ocean.
Slowly the orb went down; and the godlike sons of Achaia
Paused from the levelling fight, and the furious shout of the onset.
And, on the side of the foes, Troy's armies, retreating from combat,
And from the hard-fought field, from the cars unloosen'd the war-steeds.
And, ere thinking of food, they assembled together in council.
Standing erect, they assembled; for no man dared to be seated;
Such was the nervous dread that was fallen on all; since, Achilleus,
Now had appear'd once more; after dreary cessation from battle.
First, and with anxious heart, did Polydamas rise and address them:
Panthus' son; who presaged of the future by aid of the past time.
Hector's chosen friend; they were both of them born in the same night.
Excellent one in speech, and the other was great with his weapon.
Now, much moved for the weal of the people, he rose and address'd them.

"Ponder it, deeply, my friends!—for myself let me earnestly urge you,
Back, to the walls of the city; nor tarry for morning to find us
Here, on the open plain, by the fleet, far away from the ramparts!

While yon man was at feud with the godlike chief Agamemnon,
It was an easier war, that we waged with the sons of Achaia.
Even myself felt keenly the pleasure of camping at nightfall,
Close by the well-bench'd ships, which we eyed as the prize of the morrow.
But I am, now—and I own it—in mortal dread of Pelides.
Such is his pride of soul, that I fear he will not be restricted
More, to the open plain, where the armies of Troy and Achaia
Long, with alternate fortune, engaged in the struggle of Ares.
Battle is now to be done for the town itself, and our consorts.
Therefore, retreat at once, to the city, I pray:—and for this cause:—
Night—ambrosial night—now fetters the mighty Pelides;
But on the morrow's dawn, if, arising in armor, he find us
Here—where we now are camp'd—there are many among us, will know him,
Unto the bitter cost—and will long to re-enter the town-wall,
If they, perchance, may attain it.—I trow that the vultures and wild-dogs
Will have a feast on Trojans.—I pray that I never may know it!—
But if we do, as I say—though grievous, I own, is compliance—
Let us, throughout this night, hold council of means:—let the bulwarks,
Gates of towering height, and the great panels fitted upon them,
Polish'd, and sturdily barr'd, be arranged as the city's defences.
Let us, at dawn of day, all arm'd and resplendent in armor,
Stand, and man our walls.—He will find, if he drives from the galleys,
It is a difficult task to compel us, perforce, to engage him.
Backward and forward, in vain, he may guide the high necks of his war-steeds
Under the strong town-walls, till he drive them, in weariness, homewards.
But, he will never attempt to advance to the storm of the rampart;
Nor, if he do, will he storm it:—the wild-dogs sooner will tear him."

Then, with a look of scorn, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"Not, to my mind, are thy words, or the counsel thou darest to give us:

Bidding us, once more, enter, and bury the troops in the town-wall.—
Have ye not seen yet enough, and to spare, of yon wearisome ramparts?
Formerly, men of discernment, describing the city of Priam,
Spake of her wealth:—of her brass, and her gold, that was stored in abundance.
Now, those glittering stores are dispersed, far away from her own homes;
Phrygia's pleasant land, and Mæonia's too, have been draining,
Deeply, the wealth of Troy:—since Zeus has been pleased to afflict us.
And when, at last, we are brought by the Son of the Crafty in council,
All but to master the galleys, and drive to the sea the Achaians,
Then, is thy dastard voice, thus counselling folly among us?—
But, not a man of Troy, will obey;—I myself interdict it.
Rather attend unto me, and obey the commands that I give you.
First, let the army, in ranks, partake of its wonted refreshment;
And keep watch and ward; and let each be alert and observant.
If, among all Troy's sons, there be one who by wealth is afflicted,
Let him produce his store, giving leave to the people to share it.
Better, the wealth were theirs, than the prey of the sons of Achaia!
Let us, at dawn of day, all arm'd and resplendent in armor,
Fall, with a sharp assault, yet again on the fleet of Achaia!
If it be true that again has arisen the mighty Achilleus,
So much the worse for him, if he ventures to fight!—For my own self
Never will I shrink back from the hoarse-voiced war:—but confront him
Boldly, and either win, or relinquish the glory of conquest.
Fair and impartial is Ares:—the slaughterer often he slaughters."

Thus then Hector harangued, and the Trojans shouted approval.
Fools as they were;—and bereft of their senses by Pallas Athenè.
So, they applauded Hector, who gave to them dangerous counsel;
And not a man would attend to Polydamas counselling wisely.
So, did the army partake of its meal:—but the sons of Achaia
All night long, with groans, were bewailing the fate of Patroclus.
Peleus' son, himself, led the deep diapason of sorrow;
Laying his hands—that so many had slain—on the breast of his slain friend;

Uttering choking groans.—Such the grief of a shaggy-maned lion,
Robb'd of the cubs in its den, by the hand of a casual hunter,
Ranging the woods for deer; and the great beast follows behind him,
Many a hill-side climb'd, overhending the tracks of the robber,
Hoping to reach him at last; for the choler is fierce that impels it:—
Thus, with deep-drawn groans, did he speak to the Myrmidons round him.

"It was an idle word that I utter'd, my friends! to encourage
Aged Menœtius' heart, as I parted from him in his palace:
Bidding him think of the day of his son's returning to Opus,
Back, from captured Troy, overladen with glory and booty.
Man's best schemes, from Zeus do not always receive a fulfilment.
Both of us, he and myself, are predestined to crimson the same earth;
Even the Trojan soil:—for I never, alas! shall be welcomed
Back, to his palace-gates, by my father, the horseman Peleus;
Nor by my Goddess-mother:—but Earth, here, waits to receive me.
But, left thus, as I am, my Patroclus! awhile the survivor,
Never do I complete the funereal rites, ere I bring thee
Hector's head and armor,—the spoils of thy valorous slayer.
And, on the funeral pile, twelve youths, of the first of the Trojans,
Losing their heads, shall die in revenge for the death of my dear friend.
Till that time shall come, lie here! 'neath the prows of my galleys.
Trojan women, in plenty, and deep-bosom'd dames of the Dardans,
Day and night will spend in weeping and wailing around thee.
Captives, captured by us, by our prowess and length of our weapons;
Wasting the opulent cities, where clear-voiced mortals abided."

Thus did Achilleus speak; and he straightly enjoin'd his attendants,
Bidding them place on the fire a tripod of size; and, within it,
Water; and heat it, in haste; and wash from the body the gore-clots.
Quickly they placed on the fire a tripod of ample dimensions;
Pour'd in it water in plenty, and under it kindled the dry-wood.
Soon was the bellying brass flame-hidden; the water was heated.
And, to the burnish'd rim, when the water was rising in bubbles,

Then did they wash the corpse, and anointed it over with sweet oil;
Filling the gaping wounds with a balm that had mellow'd for nine years.
Laying the corpse on a couch, having swathed it in flexible linen,
E'en from the head to the feet, and spread a white coverlet o'er it.
All night long did the Myrmidons, ranged about mighty Achilleus,
Join with the chief in groans, and in wailing the fallen Patroclus.

Zeus, meanwhile, upon high, spake thus to his sister and consort.

"Thus is thy pleasure perform'd, and thy purpose, O beautiful Hère!
Back to the battle again is Achilleus come.—The Achaians,
Surely, are sons of thine:—they are loved with such ardent affection."

Spake, in reply to her consort, the large-eyed beautiful Hère.

"Cronides! sternest of Gods! what an ill-advised speech thou hast uttered!
Even a mortal man, not blest with the wisdom that I have,
Takes good care his designs on his fellow-men are accomplish'd.
How can it be that myself, 'mid the Goddesses standing in first rank,
Both by my right of birth, and in right of my place as the consort
Even of Zeus himself—who is monarch of all the Immortals—
How, when anger'd at Troy, could I fail, by her woes, to avenge me?"

Such was the talk of the twain, as they conversed one with the other.

Now, to the home of Hephæstus, the Goddess, whose feet are as silver,
Came:—the eternal home, star-studded;—Hephæstus had made it
All of burnish'd brass;—far first amid homes of Immortals.
Him did she find within, in the sweat of his toil, at the bellows,
Earnest:—the God was at work upon twice ten beautiful tripods;
Destined to stand by the wall, and adorn a magnificent chamber;
Mounted on golden wheels;—for a wheel self-moved under each foot;
So that they might, as automatons, enter the throng of the great Gods,
And thence homewards return:—it was truly a marvel to witness.

Unto this point had the God completed his work: and the handles,
Deep-emboss'd, was he making, and fitting, and cutting the rivets.
While he was working at these—giving form to his subtle inventions—
Near to him Thetis came up, the Goddess whose feet are as silver.
And, at the sight of her, did the bright-veil'd Charis, the consort
Fair of the dextrous God, come forward in haste to receive her.
Clasping hand in hand, and calling by name, she address'd her.

"Why is it, Thetis, thou, with thy long veil, seekest our mansion?
Honor'd and loved as thou art, it has not been thine habit to seek us.
Enter the dwelling at once,—due honor and service attend thee."

Thus did she speak; and within went forward the beautiful Goddess:
Making her guest sit down on a bright throne, studded in silver;
Fair, and richly adorn'd, with a stool for the feet to repose on.
Then she Hephæstus call'd, thus addressing the wonderful artist.

"Hither, and quickly, Hephæstus!—'Tis Thetis claims thine assistance."

Speedily then to his spouse, in reply, spake the God ambidexter.

"If it be so, we are graced by a Goddess loved and respected.
One who preserved this life, when I tumbled, in sore tribulation,
Down from heaven to earth;—by the blow of my mother, the vixen;
Seeking to hide me, because I was lame in my feet.—I had suffer'd
Much, if Thetis' self and Eurynomè had not received me,
To their immortal bosoms;—Eurynome, child of the Ocean.
Nine long years with them I abode; and I fashion'd in brass-work
Many a trinket rare—bright necklaces, buckles, and hair-pins—
Deep in the hollow cave; and, above it, the stream of the Ocean,
Fleck'd with foam, flow'd on in a murmuring current; and no one,
Neither of Gods on high, nor of men, was aware of my hiding.
Thetis alone, and Eurynome, knew of my state, and preserved me.
And this Goddess, revered, is an inmate of mine!—I am bounden,

As in return for a life, to bestow what I can upon Thetis;
Her of the braided locks.—So afford her a welcome beseeming!
I, meanwhile, will relinquish the bellows and tools of the workshop."

Thus having spoken, the God with his huge frame, up from the stithy
Halting, arose:—his legs, though weak, moved nimbly beneath him.
First from the fire he drew back the bellows apart;—and he next placed
All of his tools of work, in a coffer constructed of silver.
Then, with a sponge, sponged over his face, and his arms, and his strong hands,
Massive thick-set neck, and broad breast, shaggy with dark hair;
Put on his vest; and, grasping a staff in his hand, from the doorway,
Went forth, halting along:—two wonderful pages attend him,
Fashion'd in gold: but in semblance two living and beautiful damsels:
Gifted with mind to conceive, and with speech to express the conception;
Strength, and knowledge to act; by the gift of the Gods, the Immortals.
These, of their Lord's command ever waited observant:—and halting,
Near unto Thetis' side, he reposed him at last, on a bright throne;
Press'd her hand with his, and call'd her by name and address'd her.

"Why is it, Thetis! that thou, with thy long veil, seekest my mansion;
Loved and revered as thou art?—It has not been thy habit to seek me.
Tell me the wish of thy heart; and my soul will be prompt to perform it:
If it be what I can do, or be such as may e'er be accomplish'd."

Then, with abundance of tears, to the God spake Thetis in answer.

"Which, O Hephæstus! of all of the Goddesses haunting Olympus,
Ever was fated to bear in her mind such a load of affliction,
As upon *me*, above all, has Zeus in his pleasure inflicted?
Me—only me—to a man did he give—amid all of the Sea-Nymphs—
Peleus, Æacus' son: and I bore the embrace of a mortal;
Sorely against my will. Now my husband is stricken with old age;
Helpless he stays in his palace.—And more have I, yet, to afflict me.

We had a son, whom he gave me, to bear, and to nurture. He grew up,
Prince among mortal heroes,—and flourishing, e'en as a sapling :
Nurtured and rear'd by myself, as a young plant rear'd in an orchard.
And in his high-peak'd ships I despatch'd him in arms to the Troad,
Unto the war with Troy :—but I never again may receive him
Back to his native land, to the halls of the palace of Peleus.
And, while I have him alive, and he yet is beholding the sunshine,
Wasting grief is his ; and I cannot, if present, relieve it.
His own damsel beloved, his prize from the sons of Achaia,
She, back again from his arms, has been torn by the King, Agamemnon.
He, in distress for her loss, lay, pining at heart.—The Achaians,
Meanwhile, yielded in fight to the armies of Troy, and retreated
Back to the poops of the ships, nor ventured to sally :—the elders
Came to entreat of my son, and to proffer rich presents to bribe him.
Still did my son refuse to avert approaching disaster :
Yet he, at last, consented to send to the battle Patroclus,
Clad in my son's bright arms, and a numerous people behind him.
So, at the Scæan gates, was the battle join'd, for a whole day ;
Which same day had look'd on the sack of the town—but Apollo
Slew, in the foremost ranks, as he mightily harass'd the foemen,
Gallant Menœtius' son ;—though the glory was given to Hector.
Therefore, I pray thee, to give—if, so be, thou art willing to give them—
Arms, for my son—foredoom'd to a premature death—a resplendent
Shield, and helm, and greaves with bright hasps cleverly fitted ;
Breastplate of proof, likewise—for his own have been lost by his comrade,
Slaughter'd by Troy,—and my son on the earth lies stricken in anguish."

Thus in reply to the Goddess the wonderful artist—Hephæstus.

" Courage ! and do not permit such matters as these to distress thee !
Would ! that it lay in my skill to as easily take and secrete him
Safe from abhorrèd death, when the day of his destiny nears him,
As he is sure of armor of exquisite beauty ; which all men

Seeing shall praise in wonder—whoever may chance to behold it."

Speaking, he left her there; and departed in haste to the bellows.
Turn'd them again to the blaze, and he set them to work in an instant;
Twice ten pairs at once, each pair giving breath to a furnace;
Sending the kindling blast, and in each variation of blowing:
Now, in a storm of wind, now subsiding again to a soft breath:
Just as Hephæstus will'd, for completing the subject before him.
Into the fire he cast stiff brass, white metal beside it,
Gold of price besides, and the glittering silver:—an anvil,
Massy and huge, he arranged in the midst of the stithy—and handled
Hammer of strength and weight, in his left hand working the forceps.

First, did he fashion the buckler, of huge size; solidly welded;
All of the face emblazon'd; a bright rim running around it,
Wreath'd in a threefold plait; and, in links all of silver, the shield-belt.
Five stiff plates, close forged into one, were the shield; and upon it,
Form'd by the artist's skill, gleam'd many a subtle invention.

There, he emblazon'd earth, and the sky, and the belt of the blue sea;
And the unwearied sun, and the moon when approaching her fullest;
All of the constellations that gem, like a diadem, night's brow;
Pleiades, and Hyades, and the glory of mighty Orion;
And his observer, too, that always revolves on its axis;
Call'd by many the Bear, but known among swains as the Waggon;
Sole, amid all of the stars, that never is bath'd in the ocean.

There, he portray'd two cities, the homes of intelligent mortals:
Beautiful both to the eye:—in the one were the scenes of a marriage,
And of the marriage feasts; and the brides, with music and torches,
Came from the wedding chambers, and loud were the songs of the bridal.
Dancers dancing before them—the sound of the harps, and the hautboys,
Making a jocund din;—and the women, crowding the doorways,
Gather'd, to look at the show; and gazed on it passing, and marvell'd.

While, in another part, the inhabitants met in assembly,
Frequent and full, to determine a stiff cause, lately arisen
'Twixt two men of the town, in respect of the fine for a third slain.
One man alleging it paid; and the other, as firm, contradicting.
Both had referr'd the dispute to some other's impartial decision.
Each by the crowd was cheer'd, as each had, in turn, his supporters.
Heralds, checking the crowd, unto silence reduced them:—the elders
Sat upon polish'd stones, in a reverend circle, around them;
Holding within their hands bright sceptres of clear-voiced heralds.
Each in turn stood forth, and proffer'd his views for the judgment.
Two bright talents of gold lay gleaming amid the assemblage,
Fee and reward for the man who suggested the soundest decision.

As for the other town, it was girded by armies of foemen,
Gleaming in shining mail:—and the enemy, too, were divided,
Whether to burn it down, or to carry by storm, and distribute
All of the spoil that lay in the walls of the beautiful fortress.
Nor did the townsmen yield; but they arm'd themselves for an ambush,
Leaving the wall to be mann'd by the matrons and innocent children,
And by the men in years, whom age left equally helpless.
They themselves came out;—they had Arès, and Pallas Athène,
Leading the host;—all gold; and the raiment upon them was golden;
Fair, and majestic in size, in bright arms shining as Gods shine:
Easily mark'd and known;—for the people were pigmies around them.
When they arrived at the place where the stream's bank suited their purpose,
Hard by the river's side, at a ford well known and frequented,
There, in gleaming mail, down-seated, they waited in ambush.
Two spies, seated apart, were charged to give signs to the townsmen,
Warning their friends, at once, if oxen or sheep were approaching.
Quickly the flocks approach—two innocent herdsmen behind them
Follow, and play on the pipes; unsuspicious, and heedless of danger.
These, as the townsmen saw, they assail'd with a run; in an instant
Herds of kine lie slain, intermixed with the silvery fleeces

Borne by the glittering sheep—and slain the unfortunate herdsmen.
But when the foes perceived what a tumult arose 'mid the cattle,
Leaving debate undecided, they mounted at once on their war-steeds,
—High-stepping steeds were they—and hastily throng'd to the combat.
So was the battle join'd, and the armies fought by the stream-side,
E'en on the river's bank; and they aim'd at each other with sharp spears.
Tumult and Strife were there.—Fate, also, was busy among them,
Dragging away one man with a recent wound, and another
Yet unwounded :—a corpse she had seized on, holding the ankles.
Crimson, with human gore, was the tint of her terrible garment.
Like unto living men, on the shield, were the forms of the fighters;
One might have seen them draw to each other the prize of the corpses.

There, he emblazon'd a field, and the fat soft tilth of a lowland,
Open, and now thrice plough'd;—and, within it, abundance of ploughmen
Plough'd, round-turning the teams, and reversing them, backwards and forwards.
And, when the hinds, in turn, had arrived at the end of a furrow,
There was a man, with a cup well fill'd with the generous vintage,
Ready to quench their thirst;—their fellows toiling behind them
Look'd, with wistful glance, to the coveted end of their labors.
Dark was the unplough'd land; but the gold of the furrows was gleaming
Like to a new-turn'd tilth :—the deception was perfect to look on.

There, he emblazon'd a field, with the rich crops waving for harvest:
Reapers, reaping the crop with the bright hooks grasp'd in their right hands.
Here, of the sever'd ears were the full swaths tumbling earthwards:
Others, the binders of sheaves were collecting and binding in bundles:
Three were in number the binders; and, joyfully thronging behind them,
Children gather'd the corn, and carried it onwards in armfuls;
Bringing an ample supply to be bound.—And the Lord of the corn-field,
Holding a staff in his hand, stood silently, watching the harvest,
Pleased and light at heart :—and his servants prepared 'neath an oak-tree

Food :—and an ox was slain for the harvest feast, and the maidens
Portion'd the reapers' fare ; with abundance of meal unto each man.

Then he emblazon'd a vineyard ;—the dark grapes hanging in clusters.
Bright gold glitter'd for earth ; while black were the bunches of ripe grapes.
Side unto side, of a silvery white, were the rows of the vine-stakes.
First, was a dark-blue moat ; then a rampart carried around it,
Glimmer'd in tin ; and, alone, one foot-path led to the vineyard.
By it the pickers went, to and fro on the way to the vintage :
Maidens and stripling youths, in the innocent freedom of childhood,
Bearing the luscious fruit on their heads in the baskets of osiers.
And, in the midst of the troop, was a young lad playing a cittern ;
Playing a charming tune—for he chanted the ditty of Linus[c] ;
But with a slender voice :—his companions, with voices accordant,
Came on, capering, dancing, and keeping time with the quick feet.

Then he emblazon'd a herd of straight-horn'd beautiful oxen ;
Some stood tawny in gold, and others gleaming in white tin.
Lowing, the herd moved on, to a pasture afar from the fold-yard,
Hard by the river's stream, and the waving beds of the bulrush.
Four stout herdsmen in gold went marching along with the oxen ;
Nine dogs, active of limb, went with them, as sturdy attendants.
Right in the front of the herd, on a bull two terrible lions
Seized, despite his roars—and the great beast, bellowing loudly,
Still was carried away—despite of the dogs and the young men.
Meanwhile the savage twain, down-rending the side of the slain bull,
Gorged themselves with gore, and the quivering vitals : the herdsmen
Vainly pursued, and endeavour'd to urge on the dogs :—but the false hounds
Stood all crowded aloof, and avoided the teeth of the lions ;
Barking, and venturing near ; but retreating before an encounter.

Then, did the God ambidexter, a soft scene sketch on the buckler ;
Down by a fair copse-side ; flocks shining in silver around it :

[c] See Trollope, Cruisius, Voss, &c., &c.

Pens, and huts for the sheep cover'd in, and the rows of the sheep-folds.

Then, did the God ambidexter, a fair dance frame on the buckler;
Like to the mazy design that, of old, in the region of Gnossus,
Dædalus framed, as a wonder, for beautiful-tress'd Ariadne.
Young men, ready to sue, and maidens cumber'd with suitors,
Danced, in a sprightly measure; and each had the hand of a partner.
All of the maids wore robes of a delicate tissue;—the young men
Tunics, of fabric rare; and as bright as if gleaming with unguents.
All of the maidens wore fair coronets:—each of the youths, too,
Carried a golden dagger, which hung from a baldrick of silver.
All with a graceful ease, and with feet well accustom'd to dancing,
Moved in a complex measure.—They now sped around in a circle;
E'en as a flying wheel going round in the hands of a potter.
Now re-forming in ranks, they danced face to face to their partners.
—Close to the festive scene was a plentiful throng of beholders,
Watching the dance in delight:—and, among them, a spirited minstrel
Sang, as he play'd on a lute[d]:—in the middle, a couple of tumblers
Join'd the harmonious throng, and tumbled, in time to the music.

Then, to complete it, he fashioned the broad strong stream of the ocean;
Working it over the rim of the massive shield as a margin.

After he thus had finish'd the stubborn orb of the buckler,
Corslet of proof he forged, more resplendent to sight than the bright blaze:
Next came a massive helmet; befitting the brows of a hero;
Beautiful, deeply emboss'd, with the high crest gleaming above it.
Greaves then, of ductile tin, did he forge, to complete the equipment.

Thus when the God ambidexter had finished the armor, he brought it
Forth, and presented his gift at the feet of thy mother, Achilleus!
She, as a falcon, swoop'd from the snow-capp'd crest of Olympus,
Bearing the glittering armor—the gift to her son from Hephæstus.

[d] This line is doubtful.

BOOK THE NINETEENTH.

Shows how—his anger renounced—to the combat leap'd forth Achilleus.

Morn, in her saffron mantle, was leaving the stream of the Ocean,
Bringing the light unto mortals, and also to Gods never-dying;
When, to the Argive ships, came the Goddess, bearing her bright gifts.
Still did she find her son, on the earth, by the side of Patroclus;
Weeping aloud;—and, around him, the rows of his martial attendants;
All in tears themselves:—when, in midst of them, enter'd the Goddess;
Clung to the hand of her son; and call'd him by name, and address'd him.

"Let us, my son! acquiesce in the doom of the dead;—though afflicted!
He that is gone, met his fate by the will and the act of the great Gods.
As for thyself, stand up! and receive fair gifts of Hephæstus;
Arms of surpassing splendor; no mortal shoulders have borne such."

Thus did the Goddess speak; and she let fall the radiant armor,
Full in the front of Achilles; and dread was the clang of the harness:
As for the Myrmidon ranks, they were all panic-stricken; and no man
Ventured to fix his gaze on the heavenly arms: but Achilleus
Gazed, and the more, as he gazed, was his choler increased; and his eyeballs
Gleam'd with the light of battle, from under his brows; as he handled,
Handled with stern enjoyment, the radiant gifts of Hephæstus.
When he had sated his eyes with the sight of the glorious armor,
Thus, with wingèd words, to his mother he spake and address'd her.

"Mother! the arms that the God has bestow'd are befitting the effort
Of an immortal designer. No mortal ever produced such!
Now will I straightway arm: but I dreadfully fear, in my absence,
Ere my return, will flies have molested the son of Menœtius;
Laying their loathsome young in the wounds deep-gash'd by the spear-strokes;
Breeding creeping things;—a dishonor and shame to the dead corpse:
Lifeless, alas, as it is:—and the body be turn'd to corruption."

Then, in reply to her son, spake the Goddess, whose feet are as silver.

"Do not permit such thoughts to disquiet thy bosom, my dear son!
I will, myself, keep watch, and affrighten the pestilent legions,
Even the swarms of flies, ever ready to feed upon slain men.
Were it to be that thy friend for a whole year rested above ground,
Still should his body remain as fresh as at present, or more fresh.
As for thyself, assemble, at once, the heroic Achaians.
Fairly renounce thy wrath with Atrides, shepherd-of-people:
Then, be thine armor upon thee; and valor the covering o'er it!"

Thus, did the Goddess speak; and she breath'd high prowess within him:
And, in Patroclus' corpse, she ambrosia filter'd, and nectar;
Pouring it into the nostrils: and thus was it stay'd from corruption.

Meanwhile, the shore of the sea knew the tread of the mighty Achilleus;
As, with a terrible shout, he assembled the sons of Achaia.
They who, of yore, were wont to abide, upon board, in the galleys,
Even the pilots themselves, and the pursers, and keepers of rudders;
They who had charge of the stores, or distributed food to the people;
Even these came forth to the muster in full.—For Achilleus
Now had appear'd once more; after weary cessation from battle.
First came, limping along, two valorous servants of Arès;
Tydeus' warlike son, and the godlike leader Odysseus:
Leaning upon their spears: their wounds were painful and sore yet.

They were the foremost of note, and were seated betimes in the Council.
Next, after them, to arrive was the King of men, Agamemnon;
Not yet heal'd of his wound; which he got in the desperate combat,
Pierced by the brazen weapon of Coön, son of Antènor.
When close crowded together were all of the sons of Achaia,
Rising, aloft in the midst, spake the swift-footed chieftain, Achilleus.

"Better, by far! it had been for us both, O Atrides—for yourself,
And for myself, likewise—had we felt, but as now, when we quarrell'd;
Moved with devouring wrath, and enraged for the sake of a damsel.
It had been better, by far! had the Goddess Artemis slain her,
On the self-same day when I storm'd and plunder'd Lyrnessus.
Fewer, methinks, of Achaians, had bitten the dust in their anguish,
Slaughter'd by hostile hands, with my wrath as the cause of their ruin.
Great has the profit been unto Hector and Troy: but Achaia,
Deeply and long, I suspect, will remember the quarrel betwixt us.
But, what is past and gone, sore grieved as we are, let us leave it!
Let us perforce suppress all wrathful feelings within us.
As for myself, henceforth, I my anger renounce: for I ought not
Thus to permit my wrath to be burning for ever. In all haste
Urge then, at once, to the battle the fair-tress'd sons of Achaia!
So, may I try, at once, if the Trojans are willing to camp out
Longer, in front of the fleet; with myself as a foe.—Of the whole host,
Each, I suspect, will repose, and give thanks to his limbs, if they bear him
Safe from the wasting battle, and clear from the point of my war-spear."

Thus did the hero speak: and the well-mail'd sons of Achaia
Welcom'd, with cheers, the renouncement of wrath by the mighty Pelides.
Then intervened, and address'd them, the King of men, Agamemnon:
Speaking, but keeping his place; and not forth-standing among them.

"Friends! brave servants of Arès! ye Danaan chieftains, and heroes!
When a man rises to speak, it is proper to yield him attention:

Not interrupt.[a] Interruption, it testeth even a train'd man.
Who, when a tumult rages, can list to the voice of a speaker?
Who can be sure of speech? One is stopp'd, though a fluent debater.
Therefore, I now address myself here to Pelides.—Ye Argives,
Other than he, may attend, and note well all that I tell him!—
Many's the time and oft I have heard from the sons of Achaia
Words of reproach and blame; but I am not responsible to them.
Zeus was in fault; and Fate; and the Fury that wanders in darkness.
These are the powers that cast on my senses the curse of contention;
On that day when I ventured to plunder the prize of Achilleus.
How could I otherwise act?—'Twas the God who thus work'd to his own ends.
Eldest daughter of Zeus, is the Goddess Ăte: and all men
Suffer, enfrenzied by her: for soft are her feet; and she walks not
Over the common earth, but on human heads as a pavement:
Scattering evils around: and ever enslaving a victim.
Zeus, himself, has acknowledged her maddening might;—tho' accounted
Chiefest of Gods and men: even he was deceived by a female:
Hère cajoled him once, by the guile of her subtle contrivance.
On that day when in Thebes, bright-crown'd with her circle of bulwarks,
Travail'd Alcmèna divine, with the birth of the mighty Heràcles.
Then the expectant God thus boasted, in hearing of all Gods.

"'Hear me, immortal Gods! and ye, Goddesses, listen and hear me!
'So may I speak and declare the resolves that are swaying my bosom.
'On this eventful day will the guardian powers of child-birth
'Bring forth a man to the light, who is destined to govern his neighbors;
'All of the nations around: one descended from me, and of my blood.'

"Then, in the guile of her heart, thus answer'd the beautiful Hère.

"'Thou art about to deceive us: and not to accomplish the thing said;

[a] It would appear that Agamemnon was either experiencing, or anticipating, and deprecating, an unfavourable reception from the assembly.

'Otherwise—or if in earnest,—Olympian! swear us a great oath,
'That, whosoever, to-day, sees light, at the knees of his mother,
'If he's descended from thee, and if in his veins runneth thy blood,
'Shall be the lord and the ruler of all of his neighbors around him.'

"Thus did the Goddess speak: and Zeus never fathom'd her deep guile.
But he the great oath sware: and great was his future annoyance.
Hère, with eager speed, shot swift from the peak of Olympus,
Until she reach'd, in Achaia, the city of Argos; for there dwelt
Sthenelus, Perseus' son: and his beautiful wife; who was pregnant,
But in the seventh month, of a son much expected.—The Goddess
Hasten'd her labour-pains, and the child saw the light prematurely.
And, meanwhile, of Alcmèna, the Goddess delay'd the confinement.
Then she, herself, came back, thus announcing the news to Cronïon.

"'Zeus!—Father!—Lord of the thunder!—I've news to relate, for thy hearing!—
'There has a child been born, who is destined to govern the Argives;
'Sthenelus, Perseus's son, is his father: his name is Eurystheus;
'Thine own race!—He is one who will worthily lord it in Argos.'

"Thus did she speak: at her words deep grief fill'd the soul of the duped God.
Ate, he seized forthwith, by her head, with its glittering tresses;
And, in the wrath of his soul, did he swear a big oath, as he held her,
That, to the star-strewn heaven, and glittering home of Olympus,
Never should Ate return, to promote universal dissension.

"Such was the oath of the God; and he clutch'd her in anger, and whirl'd her
Clear from the star-strewn sky: and she tumbled to earth among mortals.
Often he cursed her work, as he look'd on the toils of his dear son,
Press'd by unheard-of labors; commanded by mighty Eurystheus.

"In like manner was I,—on the day when the warrior Hector
Slaughter'd the Argive ranks, on the shore, at the poops of the galleys,—
Void of strength to resist the attacks of the pest, who assail'd me.
But, as I then was enfrenzied, deprived of my senses by great Zeus,
Now would I gladly retract, and am ready with infinite ransom.
Rouse then, again, to the war, and encourage the people beside thee!
All of the gifts which, of late, I have promised by mighty Odysseus,
There, in thy tent, I am ready this instant to bring and to give them.
Then, if thou wilt, stay here, though eager at once for the onslaught;
Soon will the gifts be arriving, my men will speedily bring them,
Forth from my ship: thine eyes shall behold the magnificent presents."

Then, in reply to the King, spake the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Atreus' glorious son, great King of men, Agamemnon!
It is for thee to decide if the presents be brought—as they should be—
Or be retain'd! As for us, let us instantly think of the onset!
With not a moment's pause! For we ought not to linger, and waste time,
In fair words, and delays: so mighty a labor before us.
So that you all may, again, see Achilleus, far in the front ranks,
Wielding his brazen spear, overthrowing the hosts of the Trojans.
So that you all may remember to quit you as men in the battle."

Then, in reply to the hero, the much-devising Odysseus.

"Brave as thou art, thyself, and as strong as the Gods, O Achilleus!
Send not, fasting, thus, to the battle the sons of Achaia,
There to engage with Troy! It is no short space will be needed
For the momentous strife, when meet, in the shock of the phalanx,
Both of the hostile hosts; when divinely incited to combat.
Rather, command the Achaians to taste, in the front of the galleys,
Bread and wine: and these will afford to them strength and endurance.
Nor can a man be expected to pass thro' the day, until sunset,
Fasting from food; and thus to encounter an armèd opponent.

Grant, that his courage remains, that he still is in spirit for battle,
Yet,—though by little and little,—his limbs feel heavy, and grow faint,
Wearied by hunger and thirst; and his strong knees falter beneath him.
But, if a man goes forth with his thirst and his appetite sated,
Fill'd with food and wine, he is ready to combat the foemen
Boldly from morning to night; and his heart is alert; and his limbs stand
Free from fatigue, till the time when the whole host ceases from battle.
Send away, therefore, the people, and bid them disperse for refreshment!
And let the glorious gifts—that the King of men, Agamemnon,
Promised, be placed in the midst of the hosts: so that all the Achaians
May with their eyes look upon them: and thou mayst joy in thy spirit.
And let the monarch arise, and, standing in midst of the Argives,
Swear, that he never has dared to converse with the maiden, or know her
In such a manner, O King! as is proper with men and their consorts.
So, in thy deepest breast, may thy spirit be sooth'd and appeasèd.
And, after that, in his tent, let him proffer a sumptuous banquet,
For thy refreshment.—Thus, shall thine honor have full satisfaction.
And when it all has been done, thou thyself shalt be reckon'd, Atrides!
Higher in men's esteem. It is proper and right that a monarch,
Taking the lead in a quarrel, should first seek again reconcilement."

Then to the sage, in reply, spake the King of men, Agamemnon.

"'Tis with a heartfelt joy, that I list to thee, son of Laertes!
Happily timed, and wise, are all of thy words and suggestions.
Ready am I, at the moment, and eager to swear by the great oath:
Nor—as a God is above me!—will perjure myself. But Achilleus
Must, for a short space longer, restrain his impatience for battle.
All of you also remain, thick-throng'd as ye are; and await here
Until the gifts are brought; and the oaths completed between us.
And to thyself, in charge, I the office commit; and command thee,
Choose out chieftains of note, and the best amid all in Achaia,
And, from my galley's side, let them here bring the gifts; to Achilleus
Proffer'd the recent eve; and the women, also, among them.

And, in the midst of the host, shall Talthybius bring us a great boar ;
Which, unto Zeus and the Sun, may be slain to establish the compact."

Then, in reply to the King, spake the swift-footed chieftain, Achilleus.

"Atreus' glorious son! great King of men, Agamemnon!
Surely, a later hour were better adapted for these things ;
When we have fought, and are taking a first brief respite from battle ;
And the consuming rage less fiercely is burning within me!
Gash'd, and stabb'd by the weapons, our dead lie around : who have fallen
Under the rage of Hector, when Zeus heap'd glory upon him.
At such a time as this do you tell us to feast?—For my own self,
I would exhort to the battle, this instant, the sons of Achaia!
Foodless, fasting as now, would we enter the fight ; and, at sunset,
—Vengeance, sated first—sit us down to a glorious banquet.
So long as this is delay'd, I myself am determined to taste not
Food, nor drink :—for my throat would be choked with the fearful remembrance
Of yon mangled corpse, outstretch'd in the midst of my tent-door :
That of my slaughter'd friend ; and the rows of my martial attendants
Wailing around his body :—at present I care not for aught else ;
Nothing but blood, and carnage, and deep-drawn groans of the slaughter'd."

Then, in reply to the hero, the much-devising Odysseus.

" Peleus' offspring, Achilles, most mighty by far of Achaia!
In any trial of arms, I admit thou art better than I am,
Better by far ; and as much, do I think that, in soundness of judgment,
I the advantage claim !—as ahead, both in years and attainments.
Let, then, thy heart be content, and in patience, to hear what I tell thee!
Lest—for quickly do men grow sated of battle—we should not,
On that field where the scythe has mown straw down in profusion,

Reap a return of grain; when Zeus, in the change of the balance,
Gives the advantage to us[b]; and he, aye, rules the fate of a combat.
Not by defrauding their stomachs of food, can the sons of Achaia
Properly mourn their dead. Each day, too many of heroes
Perish in fight.—What end could ever there be of lamenting?
When a man dies on the field it befits us to bury the dead corpse;
Bury with hearts unmoved, having given a day of bewailing.
But we, who chance to survive the lamentable war, should remember
Ever to eat and drink; that we thus may be better enabled,
Sheath'd in burnish'd brass, to engage in continuous warfare,
With the relentless foes.—But let none of the host of Achaia
Linger away from fight, as if waiting again for a summons.
If such a summons come, it will be for his bane, who is found there,
Loitering hard by the ships.—Let us all, in a body united,
Rush on the hosts of Troy, and sharp be the onset against them!"

Thus did he speak; then gave it in charge to the issue of Nestor,
And to the mighty Phylides, Meriones also, and Thoas,
And to the brave Melanippus, and Creion's son, Lycomedes,
Bidding them go to the tent of Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
Scarce the command was given, when, lo! 'twas already accomplish'd!—
So, from the tent they brought seven tripods; e'en as the King said:
Twice ten burnish'd caldrons; and twice six beautiful war-steeds;
Seven fair damsels next, well-skill'd in the works of the artist;
Eighth, and last of the train, Brisèis; daintily featured.
Then, ten talents of gold were, in full tale, weigh'd by Odysseus:
As for the rest of the gifts, they were taken by youths of Achaia
Into the open space, in the midst of the host.—Agamemnon
Then stood up; by his side was Talthybius present, who rivall'd
Gods in his power of voice; and he held, by the monarch, a huge boar.
Then, did Atrides draw forth the dagger-knife, from the scabbard,

[b] That is, after having suffered great loss, we shall now, when Zeus turns to fight in our favor, reap no compensating advantage; in consequence of the faintness of the people. See 1 Saml. xiv, 29.

E'en as it hung, side by side, by the sheath of the terrible broadsword ;
Cropp'd from the boar its bristles, and then, hands raised unto high Zeus,
Solemnly pray'd.—Great awe, deep silence, fell on his hearers ;
All of the Argives round : and they motionless stood, and attended ;
Marking the words of the King : as he utter'd the deep imprecation.

" Witness it, thou Zeus, first ! thou loftiest, greatest of all Gods !
Earth too ! Thou, O Sun ! And ye Furies beneath,—ye Infernals !—
—Powers, that punish the dead, for the perjury utter'd when living !—
Never have I laid hand on the beautiful maiden Brisèis ;
Seeking illicit love, or for other unlawful occasion.
But, as she enter'd my tent, she immaculate since has remain'd there !—
If I am guilty in this, may the Gods pour curses upon me !
Curses, many and mighty ; reserved for the heads of the perjured !"

Speaking, the cold keen dagger he drew through the throat of the great boar.
Then, upheaving the carcass, Talthybius whirl'd it, and cast it
Into the deep sea-wave ; as a meal for the fish.—Then Achilleus
Rose, and spake, in the midst of the Argives, eager for battle.

" O Father Zeus, thou'rt wont to inflict great curses on mortals !
Never, my friends ! of himself, do I think that your monarch, Atrides,
Would, in my inmost soul, have aroused such a tumult of passion,
Seizing, in manner relentless, my maiden beloved ; had not great Zeus
Schem'd to inflict, thro' him, many deaths on the sons of Achaia.
But, go ye now to refreshment !—And then for the banquet of Arès !"

Thus did the hero speak, dismissing the hasty assembly.
And, of the Argive chiefs, each went away, straight to his galley.
Meanwhile Atrides' gifts the magnanimous Myrmidon leaders
Took into charge, and convey'd them at once to the ship of Achilleus.
Placing the rest of the gifts in the tents, and arranging the damsels.
As for the steeds, they were led to the stable by trusty attendants.

Then did Briseis, like to the golden Queen, Aphrodite,
Mark, all gash'd by the weapons, the stretch'd-out corpse of Patroclus:
And, with a cry of sorrow, she sank on the body; with both hands
Striking her neck and breast, and defacing the charms of her soft cheeks.
While thus, fair as a Goddess, she wept on the dead, and bewail'd him.

"Woe unto me!—O Patroclus!—In thee I have lost a beloved friend!—
Living, I saw thee, last; as I went on my way from the tent-door;
Now, as I come back again, do I find thee—leader of nations!—
Laid out dead!—Thus sorrow is ever succeeding to sorrow!
Him, whom I took for my husband, the gift of my father and mother;
Him, in the front of the city, I saw stricken down in the battle.
Brothers—and I had three, well loved, one mother had borne us—
All of them, on one day, trod one dark path to destruction.
Yet, on that sorrowful day, when the mighty Achilles had slaughter'd
Husband of mine, and storm'd and plunder'd the city of Mynes;
Thou, ever, drying my tears, assuredst me the noble Achilleus
Would, as his own loved wife, entertain me, and take in the galleys
Unto the land of Phthia; and celebrate, there, my espousals.
Thee, shall I ever lament: for thou ever wert tender and gentle[d]!"

Thus spake the weeping damsel; the others lamented in chorus;
Weeping for private griefs, but affecting to mourn for Patroclus.
Meantime, encircled the hero the Elders and Kings of Achaia;
Praying him, rise and eat.—Deep-groaning, he ever refused them.
"If any one of my friends is disposed to attend and obey me,
Let him, I pray, refrain; nor urge any more, on my sorrow,
Thoughts of food or drink; for my grief is unable to bear it.
E'en as I am, I abide, at the least 'till the close of the sunset."

Thus did the hero speak, dismissing the princes about him.
Yet the Atridæ staid; staid also the mighty Odysseus;

[d] There is, perhaps, no character in the Iliad which more completely unites the qualifications of an accomplished knight of the ages of chivalry than does that of Patroclus.

Nestor, Idomeneus too, and the agèd horseman Phœnix;
Seeking, by prudent suggestions, to moderate grief: but his great breast
Knew not of relief from woe: save alone in the jaws of the battle.
Ever, in bitter remembrance, he brake into loud lamentations.

"How,—in the times now past,—most loved and ill-fated of all friends!—
Prompt and alert wert thou, to provide me a delicate banquet,
Ere going out to the field, whensoever the sons of Achaia
Rush'd to the tearful war, to the strife with the horse-taming Trojans.
Now, where we often have fed, is thy mangled corpse: but my spirits
Yet will remain unsupported by food or by drink; in their yearning
Deep, unappeasëd for thee. No heavier ill could befall me!
Even the death of my father had brought me no deeper affliction;
Who, in his realm of Phthia, is weeping in anticipation,
Waiting the mournful news of the death of myself; in a strange land
Warring with Troy, as I am, in the cause of that terrible Helen.
Nor if I heard of the death of my loved son, brought up in Scyros,
If that the god-like youth, Neoptolemus, yet is surviving.
Many a time, ere now, have I cherish'd the hope in my bosom,
I was to perish, alone, far away from the horse-breeding Argos,
Here, on the plains of Troy; and thou, unto Phithia returning,
Taking, in place of myself, my son on the deck of my galley,
Back from the Scyrian isle, should'st show to him there my possessions,
Servants, and wide estate, and the high-built roof of my palace.
Peleus, himself, I suppose, is already deceased: or if living
Drags on a weary existence, a remnant of life; over-burden'd
With old age, and its ills; and is ever awaiting the message,
Heavy with news of myself:—that at length I am dead, and departed."

Weeping, the hero spake; and in tears were the elders around him;
Each in remembrance of all he had left far away in his own home.

Nor was their grief unmark'd, or unpitied by mighty Cronïon.
Quickly, with wingèd accents he spake to his daughter, Athène.

"Hast thou, my child! altogether, deserted thy favorite hero?
Is there no longer a place in thy heart for the wretched Achilleus?
Mark! how he sits by himself; all disconsolate facing his galleys,
Mourning his slaughter'd friend! all the others are seeking refreshment;
Foodless and fasting the hero remains by himself in affliction.
Go, and ambrosia pour in his bosom, and nectar, and with them
Cheer up his sinking heart; lest his strength be abated by fasting."

Thus, did the Father speak, to a right-ready hearer,—Athène.
She forthwith—with the swoop of an osprey, lengthily plumaged,
Screaming aloud, from the sky—shot down to the earth.—The Achaians
All were arming in haste; and the Goddess, unseen, to Achilleus,
Came, ambrosia rich in his bosom instilling, and nectar:
Lest the unwelcome fast should have slacken'd the knees of the hero.
Then, back again to the skies, and the massive home of her Father,
Rose:—as the Argive hosts came pouring apace from the swift-ships.

Even as down, from Zeus, in the winter tumble the snow-flakes,
Form'd in a heaven serene, by the chilling blast of the north-wind;
Not less thick, from the galleys, descended the stream of the helmets,
Gleaming in broken light; and the well-boss'd orbs of the bucklers;
Breast-plates, temper'd to proof; and the ashen shafts of the lances.
Flash'd, to the sky, the resplendence; and glitter'd the ground with the bright rays
Shot from brazen mail.—Earth, under the feet of the armies,
Sounded.—The while, in the midst, stood arming the mighty Achilleus!—
Gnashing his teeth with rage; and his eyeballs dreadfully glitter'd,
Gleaming around, like flame:—with the light of battle;—his bosom
Heaved with unceasing sorrow;—as, mad to encounter the Trojans,
Fiercely he girt on the armor, the glittering gift of Hephæstus.
First, on his stalwart legs, did he fasten the greaves: all in silver,
Shone, on the edge of the armor, the hasps where it fitted together.
Then, on his godlike breast, did he buckle the radiant cuirass.
Then, on his shoulders, slung, all studded in silver, the broadsword;

Temper'd brass was the blade: then, wielded the ponderous buckler;
Casting a splendor around him: not broader the rays of the full-moon;
Or as, afar from the land, when a beacon, over the billows,
Scatters its burning light, from the brow of a prominent headland;
Lit on a mountain-post; and illumines the wandering sailors,
Driven, by stress of weather, afar o'er the face of the ocean:
So, from the glittering face of the shield of Achilles, the bright rays
Gleam'd and glinted in space.—And, next, he adjusted the helmet,
—Massive, and triply-coned,—to his glorious brows.—And it shone there,
Bright, as the fiery Star[e]:—and, above it, sparkled the light plumes;
Nodding in feathery gold;—thick-set by the God on the high-crest.
Then, did he prove himself, in his arms;—did the mighty Achilleus!—
Whether they fitted him well; and allow'd free action and movement.—
Easy as wings were the arms:—they uplifted the shepherd-of-people.
Then, from the great spear-case, he uncover'd the spear of his father;
Massy and ponderous weapon:—no arm amid all the Achaians
Could such a weapon brandish; save, only, the arm of Achilleus;
Peleus' ashen spear;—it was cut, for his father, by Chiron;
High upon Pelion's top:—for the terror and slaughter of heroes.
Alcimus, all this while, and Automedon, leading the war-steeds,
Placed them in front of the car;—in the glittering traces;—the bright bits
Laid in their mouths; and, returning, the smooth reins over their broad backs
Hung on the solid car;—and then, high aloft, in his right hand
Holding the gleaming scourge, did Automedon, up to the war-steeds,
Bound:—and behind his attendant, in radiant armor, Achilleus
Mounted;—and glitter'd afar, as glitters the light of the day-god.
And, with a terrible shout, thus he spake to the steeds of his Father.

"Xanthus! renownèd issue!—thou, Balius! too—of Podarge!
Take better heed, for to-day, that your master is carried, in safety,
Back to the Danaan host; when we seek to return from the combat!
Nor, on the field, leave *him*, as ye, yesterday, left his Patroclus!"

[e] Sirius;—or perhaps a comet.

Then, from beneath his yoke, did the swift bright charger address him;
Xanthus: and droop'd his head, all despondent aside: and the thick mane
Over the yoke-strap stream'd, and the yoke: over-flowing the dark ground.
Human speech to the steed, for the moment, was given by Hère.

"Safely, to-day, at the least, do we carry thee; dreadful Achilleus!
Yet, is thy fated day approaching apace: and thy chargers
Are not in fault: but Fate unmoved, and the will of the great God.
Nor was it fault of ours:—no slowness, or dulness of spirit,—
Gave thy Patroclus' arms as a prey to the hands of the Trojans.
It was the bright-hair'd God, the redoubtable issue of Leto,
Slew him in front of the battle,—and yielded the glory to Hector.—
Were we to rival in swiftness the wings of the wandering west-wind—
Swiftest in speed of the breezes—we ne'er should be able to bear thee,
Off from the death that awaits;—by the hands of a God and a mortal."

Thus, did the charger speak: then stopp'd: tongue-tied by the Furies!
Then, to the steed, in reply, thus, indignantly, answer'd Achilleus.

"Xanthus! I needed not such a message of death, from my own steed!
Well do I know, of myself, that my death-day quickly approaches:
Far from my father dear, and my mother beloved.—But I will not,
Therefore, refrain from fight, till the Trojans are glutted with battle."

Loud, was his war-cry heard, as he drove on his steeds, to the front-ranks.

BOOK THE TWENTIETH.

Treats of the strife of the Gods, and the new-found might of Achaia.

Thus, by the high-curved beaks of their galleys, the sons of Achaia
Gather'd in arm'd array, by the side of thee, mighty Pelides!
While, on the swell of the plain, stood marshall'd the ranks of the Trojans.
Then, did Zeus, on the crest of the deep-folded skirts of Olympus,
Give his command, unto Themis, to summon the Gods; and she summon'd
From all sides, and commanded them all to the dwelling of great Zeus.
Midst all Gods of the waters, Oceànus only was absent.
All of the nymphs came thronging: the nymphs who are hunters of woodlands;
Lovers of bubbling fountains; and they who inhabit the rich plains.
All these came to the mansion of Zeus, great roller-of-storm-clouds.
Seated in polish'd porches the Deities sat; which Hephæstus
Fashion'd for Father Zeus, as the work of his subtle invention.
So, did they all collect in the mansion of Zeus: Enosicthon
Did not neglect that summons; but came with the rest, from the deep sea:
Took, in the midst, his seat: and demanded of Zeus his intentions.

"Why, to the council, thus, bring the Deities? Lord of the Lightning!
Troy's brave sons, and Achaia's, perchance are the theme for discussion.
War but smoulders between them; the battle will blaze in an instant."

Then, to the God in reply, spake Zeus, great whirler-of-storm-clouds.

"Thou knowest, Ennosigaios! the purpose I have, in convening,
Thus, the assembled Gods. These perishing mortals concern me.
I will abide, by myself, far away in the dells of Olympus,
Seated apart from all; and enjoying the sight. But do *ye* Gods
Go! and your stations take, with the armies of Troy, or Achaia;
And, as your minds incline, give assistance to this or to that host!
If, with no Gods in the field, should Achilleus fall on the Trojans,
Short is the time their strength will avail to encounter Pelides.
Even, of yore, their soldiers at sight of him fled in confusion;
Now, do I fear, when his wrath is aroused by the death of his comrade,
Lest, in despite of Fate, he may capture the town prematurely."

Such was the speech of Cronïon; and fierce was the strife that resulted.
Down, with diverse feelings, the Gods to the battle descended.
Unto the throng of the galleys went Hère, Pallas Athène,
Great earth-girding Poseidon, and Hermes, master of cunning,
Patron of useful arts, and designer of subtle inventions.
Last, came in aid of Achaia, the blustering strength of Hephæstus;
Lame was the God; but he moved with agility great on his maim'd limbs.
Unto the aid of Troy, came the glittering helmet of Ăres;
Phœbus, with unshorn ringlets; and Artemis, arm'd with her sharp shafts;
Xanthus, and Leto, came; and the wreather of smiles, Aphrodîte.

Now, as the Deities paused, ere siding with mortals in combat,
Swell'd each Argive breast with the hope of the fight:—for Achilleus
Now had appear'd once more, after weary cessation from battle.
Over the troops of Troy did a tremor run; and their limbs shook;
Trembling, as they beheld once again the swift-footed Pelides
Gleaming in armor against them, a champion equal to Ăres.

But when, to succor men, the Olympians enter'd the combat,
Then came a stubborn strife,—then the nations were roused—for Athène
Shouted her cry of battle:—it rang now around the entrenchments
Out in the front of the wall; now re-echoed along by the sea-shore.

While, on the side of the foes, like a dark storm, terrible Ārēs
Shouted aloud to his Troy, now mounting her loftiest ramparts;
Now by the river's brink, from the summit of Callicolōne.

Thus then the Gods, ever blessèd, commingled in strife; and excited
Both of the warring hosts, and sore was the struggle between them.
Over the field, high aloft, was the Father of men and immortals
Rolling his thunder-peals;—and, beneath, was the mighty Poseidon
Shaking the wide-spread earth.—To their high crests quiver'd the mountains;
Trembled, streaming with torrents, the low-set ranges of Ida;
Trembled her peaks; and the city of Troy, and the ships of Achaia.
Deep, in the regions below, did the king of the dead, Aïdoneus,
Start from his throne in terror, and shriek out aloud:—lest Poseidon,
Rending the solid earth, right asunder, should open a broad gap,
Unto the realms beneath; and discover to men and immortals,
All those dolorous mansions, infernal, abhorr'd by the great Gods.
Such was the direful din, as the Deities enter'd the combat.

Then, to encounter in battle the great king, mighty Poseidon,
Stood forth Phœbus Apollo, array'd with his bow and his wing'd shafts.
Ārēs had for opponent the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène.
Hère stood opposed to the huntress, arm'd with her arrows,
Artemis, archress Goddess; the sister of archer Apollo.
Hermes, patron of arts, stood, mighty opponent, to Leto.
Stood, as a foe to Hephæstus, the great stream; whirling in eddies;
Xanthus his name with the Gods, but known among men as Scamander.

Such the array of Gods, that encounter'd with Gods. But Achilleus
Burn'd, mid the press of chiefs, to encounter none other than Hector,
Priam's valorous son: for his soul was on flame to engage him;
Eager to pour his blood in libation to terrible Ārēs.

Then, to encounter Pelides, Apollo, rouser of nations,
Urged on the mighty Æneas, and breath'd high courage within him:

Under the borrow'd form of Lycaon, offspring of Priam;
Like unto him in voice spake Apollo thus to the Dardan.

"Counsellor, sage, of Troy! What now has become of the boastings
Utter'd, of late, by thyself when carousing in Troy, to her princes,
Of thy resolves to engage in the battle Pelides Achilleus?"

Then, to the God disguised, spake quickly, in answer, Æneas.

"Wherefore remind me of this? and thus urge me unwillingly onward,
Into unequal strife, with the terrible strength of Pelides?
Not for the first time now should I stand as the foe of Achilleus.
Well I remember his spear; it has chased me before from the mountains,
Down from the pastures of Ida; that day when he foray'd our oxen;
Pedasus sack'd and burnt, and Lyrnessus also; but great Zeus
Carried me, safely away, by the speed of my knees, from the combat.
Else, had I sunk, overcome by Achilles and Pallas Athène;
For, as a burning light, went the Goddess in front; and impell'd him
On, with his brazen spear, to the death of his foes: and they died there;
Leleges, Trojans too. No mortal can meet him in combat.
Some God ever is near him; a mighty protector from evil.
True to the mark, of itself does his own spear fly; and it fails not,
Ever, to flesh its point in the breast of a foe. Could I reckon
Upon impartial Gods, I were then not so easily vanquish'd:
Not though my foe could boast that his limbs were impassive as brass is."

Then, to the chief in reply spake the great king, Zeus-born Apollo.

"Thou, too, utter thy prayers to the Gods, who endure unto all time;
Even as prays thy foe!—Men say Zeus-born Aphrodìte
Bore thee. A God less high is the ancestor of thine opponent.
Daughter of Zeus is thy mother; his mother is child of a sea-God.
Carry thy brazen spear, undismay'd, to the van: nor be daunted
Back from the field of battle by threats and encounter of hard words."

Speaking, the God breath'd vigor and strength in the shepherd-of-people.
Boldly he forward strode, all gleaming in brass, through the front-ranks.

Nor was Anchises' son unobserved by the white-arm'd Hère,
As, 'mid the crush of heroes, he strode to the front of Pelides.
Calling together the Gods of Achaia, she spoke and address'd them.

"Ponder it, deeply, Poseidon! and thou, too, Pallas Athène!
Ponder it, well, in your minds! what end may be look'd for, from these things!
Gleaming in burnish'd brass, thro' the front ranks hastens Æneas,
Full on Pelides front: and behind him is Phœbus Apollo.
Let us advance in haste; either drive back the God to his own friends;
Or, as a guard, let one of us stand by the side of Achilleus,
Giving him mighty endurance and force for the fight; that he may not
Feel that his spirits fail; but may know that the Gods who assist him
Are, of Immortals, first; and that they who have formerly aided
Troy, in the direful strife, are as nothing, compared with his own Gods.
Was it not even for this we descended, to-day, from Olympus;
Lest, in the strife with Troy, any evil may chance to befall him,
Prematurely, to-day?—He will afterwards bear, what he must bear;
All, at his birth, that Fate span out for his thread of existence.
Should not Achilleus know from our own lips all that is purposed,
How were he scared, if he met in the battle a God as opponent!
Terrible, aye, are the Gods, in the manifestation of Godhead!"

Then to the Goddess, thus, spake the great earth-shaker, Poseidon.

"Hère! Be not excited so needlessly thus! There is no cause.
Right unwilling were I that the Deities join'd in the combat,
We and the Gods of Troy, who in sooth are no equal opponents.
Let us abandon the field; and be station'd awhile on the summit
Of yon watch-tower's height: and to men leave the charge of the battle.

But if the fight be commenced by Ares, or Phœbus Apollo,
Stopping the path of Achilles, or hindering him in the combat,
Then shall the cry of battle, the onset begin upon our side,
With not an instant's pause! Full soon will the strife be decided;
Sending them, hurrying back, to the rest of the Gods on Olympus;
Vanquish'd by mightier force, and constrain'd to unwilling submission."

Thus having spoken the monarch, the sea-God, bearing the dark-locks,
Led the assembled Gods to the rampart of mighty Heracles.
It was a mounded wall; which the Trojans, and Pallas Athène,
Form'd, as a refuge-place, for the hero of old; when the sea-beast
Came from its native deep, and pursued him ashore to the wide plain.
There did Poseidon sit, and the rest of the Gods of Achaia:
Shrouded by floating vapors, which hung as a garment about them.
They who befriended Troy on the summit of Callicolone,
Sat by the side of Phœbus, and Ares, waster of cities.
Thus, and away from the field, did the Gods hold council on both sides.
All, though Zeus upon high gave the signal for fight, were reluctant,
Meeting the adverse Gods, to commence such a fearful encounter.

Now, was the whole plain fill'd with advancing hosts. The effulgence
Flash'd from the mail-clad men, and caparison'd steeds; and the earth shook
Under their trampling feet. Two leaders of mighty achievement,
Full in the midst of the hosts, press'd on to attack. There Æneas,
Gallant Anchises' offspring; and, facing him, godlike Achilleus.
First, and with menacing aspect, Æneas moved to the combat;
Nodding his massive helm, and bearing the boss of his buckler
Far in advance of his breast; and shaking the brass of his bright spear.
While, from the opposite side, did Pelides rush: as a lion,
Ravager, known in the land; whose death the inhabitants long for;
He, with collected might, when they chase him, at first disregarding
All their array, stalks on; till, by chance, an adventurous hunter
Galls him, from far, with a spear: then he stretches his limbs, expanding
Wide his terrible jaws, with the foam gather'd thick on his white teeth;

Swelling his breast with fury, he lashes his sides and his buttocks,
Whirling his sinewy tail, thus rousing himself for the death-strife ;
Till, having mark'd his object, he springs on his hunters, determined,
Either to slay an assailant, or lose his own life in their front rank :
So, was Achilleus borne, by the might and the courage within him,
Full on the path of his foe, the magnanimous leader Æneas.
Now, when moving near, each chief stood, facing the other.
First to address his foe, was the great swift-footed Achilleus.

"Why, O Æneas ! thus in advance of the ranks ? What expecting,
Seekest thou, thus, once more to do battle with me ?—Will the Trojans,
Tamers of steeds, submit to the sway of the victor Æneas,
Sitting in Priam's place ?—Suppose, that Pelides is vanquish'd,
Is it so sure that the monarch will render the prize he has pledged thee ?
Sons has he many around him ; he is not a fool, nor a dotard.—
Or, has a fair estate been suggested by Troy, to be chosen,
—Dark with fruitful vines, and rich with the gold of its harvests,—
After Achilles' death?—'Tis a weighty condition precedent !—
Not for the first time, now, will my javelin scare thee from battle !
Dost not remember the day when I chased thee alone, 'mid the oxen,
Down from the slopes of Ida ; the speed of thy knees, interposing,
Saved thee, fleeing away ;—not a look cast, turning behind thee,
Ere in Lyrnessus' walls was the fugitive stay'd ? But her walls fell,
Under my fierce assault ; by Athène aided, and great Zeus :
Then were her beautiful dames led afar in captivity, borne off,
By this unconquer'd arm. But Zeus, and the Deities, saved thee.
Once is enough :—and again I suspect that the Gods will afford not
Hoped-for escape from death :—so I counsel thee back to thine own friends,
Ere any evil befall thee : and stand not playing the hero,
Thus, in the face of my spear. E'en a fool, if he's hurt, understands it."

Then, to the hero thus spake in answer, the mighty Æneas.

"Think not, Peleus' son! to instil in me terror by hard words;
As if a foolish child!—I, myself, am well able to give back
Gibe, in return for gibe; and to bandy unseemly reproaches.
Well do we know what race, what parents, each of us springs from;
Know them by wide report; and by hearing them often discoursed of.
Though, for myself, with mine eyes, I never have look'd on thy parents:
Nor hast thou upon mine.—Men say that thy father is Peleus,
And that thy mother is Thetis; the fair-tress'd nymph of the deep-sea.
As for myself, I am son of the great-hearted leader Anchises:
Such the descent I boast: and my mother is Queen Aphrodìte.
One, or the other, pair, this day will lament for a dear son
Fallen in fight!—Thus descended, we cannot, contented with vain words,
Meet, as foes, and part; each safe from the other's achievement.
But, if thou wishest to learn what is known unto many, and talk'd of,
Even the line of mine ancestors—listen the while I relate it[a].
First, of the regal race, was Dardanus gotten by great Zeus:
Founder was he of the walls of Dardania; for on the wide plain,
Ilion, sacred town, was as yet unknown to the nations.
Safely our fathers dwelt on the lowlier ranges of Ida.
Dardanus had, for a son, Ericthonius, powerful monarch;
Blest among mortal kings, with riches in greatest abundance.
Wealthy was he in steeds: three thousand fed in his pastures;
Mares; and each bright mare had a young foal running beside her.
Such was their beauty, a God, even Boreas' self, was enamour'd
Viewing their forms, and went as a dark-maned charger among them.
And from such commerce sprang twelve foals of celestial swiftness;
Foals, that with flying feet, over corn-fields heavy for harvest,
Skimm'd, and the bending ears sank down, but the haulm was unbroken:
And, as with flying feet, when they traversed the face of the ocean,

[a] The whole of this conversation is intolerable. Unless spurious, it can only be accounted for by the supposition that Homer, an Asiatic Greek, was living in the Troad when the grandchildren of Æneas were ruling in Troy; and that the poet was anxious to glorify the reigning family.

Swiftly and safely they ran on the hoary crests of the surges.
Tros was his only son; first monarch renown'd of the Trojans.
Three bold sons from Tros were descended—a notable offspring—
Ilus, Assaracus too, and, fair as the Gods, Ganymedes:
Fairest was he, Ganymedes, of all who are fair among mortals;
Him, for his beauty's sake, that immortal eyes might discern it,
Carried the Gods unto Zeus, as his bearer of wine at the banquet.
Of the remaining sons, was Laomedon born unto Ilus:
Many the sons of Laomedon—Priam, and ancient Tithonus,
Lampus, Clytius too, Hiketaon, offspring of Ares.
Capys sprang from Assaracus; and was the sire of Anchises:
I am the son of Anchises; and Hector is offspring of Priam.
Such are the famous race and the blood that I boast to have sprung from.
Zeus, over all supreme, as the mind of the Deity pleases,
Valor bestows upon men, or at times he as clearly abstracts it.
Then, let it never be said, that we here, in the midst of the combat,
Stood, as childish fools, content with a wordy encounter.
It were an easy task for us both to give mouth to invectives,
Many and deep; and sufficient to founder a hundred-oar'd galley.
Most discursive the tongue is of men; and the tales that it utters,
Diverse; hither and thither is carried the tale of its stories.
Sharp as thy gibe may have been, a retort as severe will await thee.
What is the purpose thus to encounter each other with hard words,
Bandying sneers and reproaches; as if we were quarrelsome women;
Who, with minds disturb'd at some feminine source of discordance,
Rush to the open street, and vent on each other reproaches;
True and false in turn; as words are supplied by their anger.
Words of thine are vain to divert my attack, ere the spear-point
Prove our mutual strength.—No longer delay! Let us hasten
Spear in hand to the proof of the prowess which either relies on."

Thus did the hero speak, and hard on the terrible buckler
Drove his stalwart spear; loud answer'd the shield to the spear-point.
And, not undismay'd, far away from his body, Pelides

Bore his massive shield; for he deem'd the long-shadowing weapon
Sent from the arm of Æneas might even be able to pierce it.
Fool as he was, to perceive not in mind and in quick apprehension,
'Tis not an easy thing for the excellent gifts of the great Gods,
Yielding to mortal men, to be baffled, or made unavailing.
Nor did Æneas' spear, though mighty, and mightily handled,
Break thro' the heavenly shield: for the gold at the centre repell'd it.
Two strong plates did it pierce; but three stood firm and unfractured.
Five, were the solid plates, which the limping Artificer[b] fashion'd.
Each exterior plate was of burnish'd brass; and the next, tin;
That in the centre was gold: and there stuck the point of the jav'lin.
Then flew, in turn, from his arm, the long-shadowing spear of Achilleus,
Aim'd at the Dardan chief; and his round shield, equal on all sides,
Struck, on the outer rim; where the coating of brass was the thinnest,
And where the tough bull's-hide was the lightest in substance. The broad blade,
Borne by the Pelian ash, clove the buckler in twain: and Æneas
Downwards shrunk dismay'd, and he bore up his shield; sore affrighted
At such a near escape; and the spear, just avoiding his shoulders,
Stood, deep-planted in earth; yet first having cloven asunder
All the ample targe; and he stood, though the lance never touch'd him,
Sorely dismay'd, for the blow was a grazing stroke: and his eyeballs
Ached with nervous pain, o'erclouding his sight. But Achilleus
Baring his bright keen blade, rush'd fiercely to close; and his war-cry
Dreadfully sounded afar: then Æneas lifted a huge stone,
One of a ponderous weight, two men were unable to heave it,
Men such as now exist; yet he easily lifted, and brandish'd,
And on his foeman's helm or his shield, as he rush'd to assail him,
Hurling the rock, had attempted to turn away threaten'd destruction;
And thus in closing strife he had died by the sword of Pelides;
Had not his plight been perceived by the great earth-shaker Poseidon.
To the assembled Gods, thus, turning around, he address'd them.

[b] Hephæstus.

"Friends! I am deeply concern'd for the high-minded chieftain Æneas!
Now, from the arm of Pelides, in prospect of entering Hades,
Urged, as he was, to the strife, by persuasion of Phœbus Apollo;
Fool, as he is! For the God who impell'd, is unable to guard him.
Yet were it hard for a man, undeservedly, thus to be slaughter'd;
Slaughter'd for other's crimes; he has ever, acceptable offerings,
Brought unto all of the Gods, unto all who inhabit the broad skies.
Then let us intervene, and save even him from his near fate;
Lest even mighty Cronïon be wroth in his heart, if Achilleus
Slaughter a man such as he. Fate cannot permit him to die thus;
Dardanus cannot, thus, be permitted to lack a descendant;
Dardanus, whom great Zeus held dearest of all his offspring;
All of his own begetting, whose mothers were women, and mortals.
Priam's house and race are detested, at length, by Cronïon;
Troy shall be ruled by Æneas;—himself, and a line of descendants,
Sons, and sons of sons, shall reign in abiding succession."

Then to the monarch thus, spake in answer, the beautiful Hère.

"Think of it well, and resolve in thine own bosom, Ennosigaios!
Whether to rescue Æneas, or suffer him, good as he may be,
Now to be slain, overcome by the hands of Pelides Achilleus.
We two have sworn great oaths, in the hearing of all the Immortals,
Pallas Athène and I, we have sworn we will never forgive Troy;
Never from Trojan heads to avert the descending destruction:
Not when the town itself is destroy'd in the great conflagration;
That which is doom'd to consume it, and kindled by sons of Achaia."

Such were the words of the Goddess; and, hearing them, mighty Poseidon,
Bending his course to the fight, pass'd on thro' the clash of the lances,
Unto the spot where Æneas was combating hard with Achilleus.
Over the eyes of the latter—the eyes of Pelides Achilleus—
Pouring a blinding mist; he extracted the spear, with its brass-head,
Ashen shaft and all, from the shield of the noble Æneas.

This did he lay on the earth, at the feet of Achilles; and grappled
Close with the Dardan leader, and bore him aloft, from the war-field:
Many the ranks of the combatants, many the rows of the chargers,
Traversed Æneas thus, borne along by the hand of the great God.
Till he, at last, arrived at the skirt of the turbulent combat,
Where, in the rear, the Caucònes were arming themselves for the battle.
There, right close to the prince, did the great earth-shaker, Poseidon,
Come, and, with wingèd words, thus he spake to the chief, and address'd him.

"Which of the Gods, O Æneas, has urged on thy folly, to venture,
Thus, in unequal strife, an encounter with mighty Pelides?
Stronger, by far, than thyself, and dearer, by far, to the great Gods?
Yield him, in future, a path; if chance again find you opponents!
Lest, by a death premature, thou descend to the regions of Hades.
But when death and fate have exacted their claim from Achilleus,
Then, with heart undaunted, re-enter the fight, 'mid the front-ranks;
No other son of Achaia shall ever be able to slay thee!"

Such were the words of the God; and he left him, instructed in all things.
Then, from Achilles' eyes, did he scatter the mist that was round them;
Mist which the God had sent: and his eyes saw clear in an instant.
Then, to his own proud heart, thus he mutter'd his deep indignation.

"Gods! what a wonderful sight do mine eyes look upon, in amazement!
Here, on the earth, is my spear; and the Dardan chief, whom I aim'd at,
And with a thirst for his life—ay, a fierce thirst—him I discern not.
Dearly beloved, in sooth, must Æneas have been by the great Gods:
Yet did I always imagine he boasted in vain of their favor.
Off with him!—Never again will he venture in fight to confront me;
Pleased as he is, even now, with escape from the death that approach'd him.
But, of the Danaan hosts, let me urge on the ranks to the combat;

Testing the ranks of Troy, whether any one else will oppose me."

Speaking, he rush'd 'mid the ranks; thus shouting to each of the leaders.
"Wage not a distant war, any longer, ye sons of Achaia!
Now with the Trojan host: press, man upon man, to the combat.
Hard were the task for myself, whatsoever my strength in the battle,
With such an army as Troy's to engage, and encounter the whole host.
Neither could Ares' self, great God as he is, nor Athène,
In such unequal strife, thus enter the jaws of the battle.
But, with what prowess I have, I am with you to-day:—be the need for
Hands, or feet, or strength,—I'm Achaia's, without reservation.
Through yon hostile ranks, right ahead, will I charge; and the Trojan,
Chancing to meet this spear, will repent, I suspect, the encounter."

Such, his inspiring words.—While Hector, addressing the Trojans,
Spake in upbraiding words; as he promised to fight with Achilleus.

"Valorous leaders of Troy, be not scared at the sight of Pelides!
Were it a war of words, I myself would encounter Immortals;
Though, in the strife of the spear, 'twere a bootless task to assail them.
Not of the vaunts of Achilles, will all receive a fulfilment:
If he accomplish part, yet the rest will be lame imperfection.
Him am I ready to meet!—If his hands were flame, would I meet him!
Ay!—If his hands were flame; and his fury like steel at the white-heat!"

Thus did he speak; and his soldiers, their long spears, raising around him,
Brandish'd, as eager for fight; and shouted aloud for the combat.
But, by the side of Hector, spake warningly Phœbus Apollo.

"Do not be over-bold, and engage in the front with Achilleus!
But 'mid the mingled fight, and the thunder of battle, await him!
Lest that his javelin pierce, or his broad blade happen to smite thee!"

Such was his warning voice; and Hector, alarm'd as he heard it,
Enter'd the crush of chiefs, there commingling, scared by the God's words.

Then, in the might of his valor, on Troy charged fiercely Achilleus;
Charged, with his battle-cry ringing fearfully round. And he slaughter'd
First, at the head of his army, Iphition, son of Otrynteus;
Born of the Nais, the nymph, to Otrynteus, waster of cities;
Born amid Hyda's plain, 'neath the snow-capp'd summits of Tmolus.
Him, as he gallantly rush'd into battle, the spear of Pelides
Struck in the midst of his forehead:—the head gaped, equally parted:
Thunder'd his arms as he fell; and thus gloried the mighty Achilleus.

"Down! in the dust, is thy portion; thou terrible son of Otrynteus!
Here is thy doom'd death-place. Though born by the lake of Gygæa,
Where, in the region of streams, lie thine own patrimonial acres:
Hyllus, teeming with fishes; and Hermus, whirling in eddies."

Thus, the exulting chief;—as his foe's eyes closed in the death-sleep.
Tearing his mangled corpse, with the wheels, the fierce steeds of Achaia
Rush'd thro' the front of the fight.—Then he slaughter'd a son of Antenor,
Champion sturdy in battle, Demoleon; striking the Trojan
Full on his brass-cheek'd helmet, directing the spear at his temples.
Helmet of brass gave way to the shock of the blow; for the spear-point
Pierced through temper'd metal, and shatter'd the bone underneath it;
Smashing the brain within, and quenching his ardor for battle.
Then, overtaken in flight, did Hippodamas die: he deserted
Steeds and battle-car; but the spear, as he fled, overtook him,
Piercing his back: and he gasp'd, and he bellow'd aloud as a big bull
Bellows, when dragg'd by the youths to the shrine of the great Enosicthon,
Him the renown'd sea-ruler; in Hèlice.—Thus did the Trojan
Bellow, pierced by the spear; till the proud soul fled from the pale limbs.

Then did he reach, with his weapon, the beautiful youth Polydorus;

Priam's graceful son; by his father forbidden the battle:
For that, of all his sons, of the whole of his numerous offspring,
He was the youngest-born; and the dearest, and best in the foot-race.
Yet, in the folly of youth, to display and to vaunt of his swiftness,
He, at the cost of his life, came careering in front of the vanguard.
Him, as he darted along, with his spear, the swift-footed Achilleus
Struck, on the midst of his back; where the bright clasps, joining the cuirass,
Gleam'd in burnish'd gold, and doubled the strength of the harness.
Thence, did the bright spear-point burst, traversing through, by the navel:
And, with a dying groan, sank the youth on his knees: o'er his eyeballs
Floated the mists of death; as he press'd on his wound with his pale hands.

Hector was nigh; and he look'd on his own father's son, Polydorus,
Wallowing, thus, on the earth; with his pale hands grasping his entrails:
Sudden, a watery mist dimm'd the eyes of the chief; and he could not
Longer abide at a distance; but moved to the front of Achilleus,
Shaking his pointed lance, like a flickering flame.—When Pelides
Saw him, he sprang to oppose him; and mutter'd, in fierce exultation.

"Now, have I met with the man, who has wounded my soul, above all men.
He, who has murder'd my friend: much honor'd and loved. But the time 's come
For us to wander, no longer, apart, 'mid the ridges of battle."

Then, with a wrathful scowl, he accosted the warrior, Hector.

"Forward! a pace!—'Twill thence be a readier step to destruction!"

Then, all undismay'd, answer'd Hector, glancing his bright crest.

"Hope not, O Peleus' son! to instil in me terror by hard words;
As if a foolish child!—I myself am well able to give back

Gibe, in return for gibe; and to bandy unseemly reproaches.
Well do I know thy might; and how much it is greater than mine is!
But, in a strife such as this, the result ever rests with the great Gods!
Though I am weaker than thou, my spear, if it happen to hit thee,
May be enough for thy death! Its point has been known as a sharp one!"

Thus did the warrior speak; and he darted his spear; but Athène
Turn'd, with a breath, far away, from Achilles the lance, and impell'd it
Far from the breast of the foe; and she brought it again unto Hector;
Laying the weapon down, in his front, at his feet. But Achilleus,
Shouting his cry of battle, rush'd madly upon him, exulting,
Hoping his foeman's death. But right easily Phœbus Apollo
Bare him away from the battle, and roll'd thick vapors around him.
Thrice, at his unseen foe, struck fiercely the mighty Achilleus!
Struck with his brazen spear: thrice vapor, impassive, received it.
But when, great as a God, he the fourth time rush'd to the onslaught,
Thus, with a deep-drawn groan, did he utter his fierce lamentation.

"Dog! Thou hast managed again to escape from the death!—But destruction
Threaten'd thee nearly!—Though Fate is averted by Phœbus Apollo,
Ever adjured, as he is, when thou facest the clash of the lances.
Yet, if again we encounter, this hand will assuredly slay thee,
If amid all of the Gods I can count upon one to assist it.
Now for the rest of Troy—let them come as they may, I assail them."

Forth, from the hero's arm, as he spake, flew his weapon at Dryops,
Hitting him full on the neck. Then down went gallant Demuchus,
Beautiful, stalwart chieftain; a son of the mighty Philetor:
Struck on the knee, at first, with a blow of the spear; then the falchion
Gash'd his vigorous form with a wide wound: from it the soul fled.
Dardanus perish'd the next, and Laogonus, children of Bias;
Slain in a single assault; for he drove them to earth from the chariot;
Piercing the one with his spear, and one cutting down by a sword-stroke.

Then did he slaughter Tros, young son of Alastor :—the youth sprang,
Clasping the hero's knees, and besought his compassion, and pray'd him
Not to bereave of life, but have mercy on one of his own age.
Fool as he was ! uninform'd ! Naught avail'd him his pitiful pleading.
It was address'd to a man neither tender nor merciful-hearted ;
But of a stern resolution :—for, e'en as the youth was beseeching,
Clasping his knees in pray'r, through his side came the ruthless falchion,
Cleaving his bosom asunder : the red blood, forth from the liver,
Flooded his tender breast ; and the shadows of death, like a dark veil,
Clouded his closing eyes.—Then Mulius died : for he struck him,
Close at hand, with the spear, on the side of his head ; and transfix'd it,
Even from ear to ear.—Then Echeclus, son of Agenor,
Died : for the trenchant sword fell, cleaving his head ; and the great blade
Deep in his brain-pan lay, all warm with his blood : o'er his eyelids
Floated the purple death ; and Fate put her finger upon him.
Then, where the nerves and the muscles, uniting in one, at the elbow,
Knitted his strong right arm, was Deucalion struck ; for the spear pass'd
Right through, smashing the joint : and he stood, as dangled his right hand,
Waiting approaching death : and it speedily came ; for a sword-stroke
Swept off helmet and head, far away from the shoulders ;—the marrow
Sprang from the severed spine : and the corpse fell heavily forward.
Rhigmus, the Thracian chief, the redoubtable offspring of Peireus,
Lately arrived at Troy, from the rich fat vales of his own land,
Next did the hero strike, with his spear in the groin ; and the spear sank
Deep : and he roll'd from his car. His attendant, Areithöus,
Striving to turn his chargers, received, 'mid his shoulders, the jav'lin,
Hurling him down from the car ; on a heap 'mid the floundering war-steeds.

As, in a mountain-glen, when the fierce flame enters the woodlands,
Parch'd by the summer's heat, and the thickets arise in a bright blaze,
Fast as the freshening breeze whirls the conflagration on all sides :
Thus, in his strength, like a God, with his spear did the mighty avenger

Ravage the routed ranks ; and the dark earth reek'd with the carnage.
Even as two great oxen, their broad brows join'd under one yoke,
Led to the threshing-floor, by a rustic, to trample the barley ;
Tread out the grain, with ease, on the smooth floor, under their broad feet :
So, in the front of Achilles, the hoofs of his terrible chargers
Trampled his slaughter'd foes, and the shields of the slain ; and his axle
Dripp'd with red blood-drops, and the rims, in the front of the chariot ;
E'en with the blood-drops dash'd from the dead, by the hoofs of the war-steeds,
And by the whirling wheels.—And still did the mighty Pelides
Press on in glory's chace : his hands all reeking with carnage.

BOOK THE TWENTY-FIRST.

Shows, in the river's depths, how sorely bested was Achilleus.

Soon as the routed hosts had arrived at the ford of the broad stream,
Xanthus, whirling in eddies—the river descended from great Zeus—
There, did he cut them in twain. One division he drove to the town-wall,
Over the level plain; where, bewilder'd, the sons of Achaia,
Fled, but yester-eve, in affright from the fury of Hector:
There, Troy's broken troops now scatter'd in flight; and a thick cloud
Hère roll'd in front, impeding the rout: but their comrades
Rush'd to the deep-flowing river, the stream of the silvery eddies;
And, with a mighty splash, plunged into the water:—resounded
All its depths, and the banks re-echoed the din;—as, with wailing,
Hither and thither the fugitives swam; swept round in the whirlpools.
As when, soaring aloft to a river, the swarms of the locusts,
Fleeing the fiery fringe,[a] if a fierce flame, suddenly kindled,
Blazes beneath their course, fall, scorch'd, in a mass, on the waters;
So, by Achilles' arm, was the deep-whirling torrent of Xanthus
Choked with a drowning mass intermix'd; both soldiers and war-steeds.
Then, did the Zeus-born chief lay his javelin by; and he placed it
Safe on the bank, reclined amid tamarisk branches; and, wielding
Only his sword, plunged in, like a God, bent on fearful achievements,
Slaughtering, right and left; and loudly the groans of the dying
Rose, as his falchion struck; and the waves ran crimson with carnage.
Just as the shoals of fish, far away from a big-bellied dolphin,
Flying, attempt to escape wheresoever the harbor is shoalest,

[a] The long line of fires, lighted in order to drive them from the land.

Terrified; for whosoever is caught by the dolphin, is eaten:
Thus, did the men of Troy, by the stream of the terrible torrent,
Cumber the river-bluffs.—But the victor, weary of slaying,
Chose, and dragg'd yet alive, twelve Trojan youths from the water;
Doom'd to atone, with life, for the death of the son of Menœtius.
Helpless, as frighten'd fawns, did he drag them ashore; and he bound them,
Tight, hands fasten'd behind with thongs well cut and adapted;
Thongs, which themselves had borne as a part of their martial equipment:
Gave them in charge to his comrades, to carry away to the galleys;
And, yet again, on the foe, rush'd hot for renewal of slaughter.

Then, did he light on a son of the Trojan monarch; Lycaon,
Flying away from the river: the youth was captured of old time;
Caught, in his father's fields, in a midnight foray, and dragg'd thence
Sorely against his will: he was lopping the shoots of a fig-tree
Off, with sharpen'd blade, for the wood of the rails of a war-car;
When, unlook'd-for ill came, in shape of the mighty Achilleus.
Taking the youth in his ships, he had carried and sold him to Lemnos,
Where the demanded price[b] was paid by the issue of Jason.
Thence did Eëtion, paying a bountiful ransom, redeem him
—He was his Imbrian host—and send him away to Arisba.
Secretly stealing thence, he had lately arrived at his own land:
Scarcely eleven days had he spent since coming from Lemnos;
Making cheer with his friends; and the twelfth morn came, to consign him
—Such was the will of the God—yet again to Achilles; predestined,
Loath as the stripling was, to despatch him afar, unto Hades.
And when the youth was seen by the swift-footed leader, Achilleus—
Stripp'd of his helm and shield, no martial spear in his right-hand,
All thrown down upon earth, as, fainting with sweat and exertion,
Forth from the river he fled, and his knees sank weary beneath him;—
Sorely incensed at heart, with his great soul communed the hero.

[b] A silver vase. See Il. xxiii, v. 746.

"Gods! What a wondrous sight these eyes now view in amazement!
Surely the Trojan dead—those valorous chiefs I have slaughter'd—
Standing again up alive, will next break forth from the darkness:
E'en as this youth, whom lately I sold unto beautiful Lemnos,
Comes back, safely escaping captivity's doom!—Not the gray sea's
Breadth can hold *him* fast;—which many, reluctant, are held by.
But, let him, now, this time, have a taste of the point of my war-spear;
So may I ascertain, and my mind may be satisfied in me,
Whether he yet can escape; or if Earth may be able to hold him:
Life-producing Earth;—which holds down many a strong man."

Thus did he speak, in his wrath; but the stripling, in fear and amazement,
Came, to embrace his knees; and earnestly sought and debated,
How to escape from death, and the fate that was darkening o'er him.
Raising the spear, as he came, at the Trojan, the mighty Achilleus
Struck, with a fell intent: but he stoop'd, and, evading the spear-stroke,
Ran to the hero's knees; and the spear at his back, in the dark earth
Buried the point; though athirst, yet for once disappointed of carnage.
With one hand did the stripling his knees embrace, and with one hand
Laid strong hold on the murderous spear, and despairingly held it.
While, with wingèd accents, he utter'd a sad supplication.

"Lo! I am clasping thy knees! O Achilleus! Pity and spare me!—
Zeus-born chief, I am here, as a suppliant: worthy compassion.
For, at thy board[c] have I formerly tasted the fruits of Demèter,
On that day, when first I was captured by thee in the orchard,
Carried, and sold as a slave, far away from my father and dear friends,
Unto the Lemnian isle.—I was sold for a hundred oxen:
Thrice as much would I now give in ransom for life.—I have spent here
Only eleven days, 'tis my twelfth morn since my arrival
Back from many woes: and a cruel Fate has consign'd me
Into thy hands, yet again.—I am, surely, detested by great Zeus;

[c] It is clear that Lycaon, who had just appeared in arms against Achilles, had no claim to be regarded as a suppliant; nor was he ever a guest.

Else would he never have thrown me again on thy mercy.—Predestined
Unto a fate premature, did Laòthoe, daughter of Altes,
Bear me: he once was king of the Leleges, eager for battle:
Pedasus own'd his rule, overlooking the Satnian river:
Daughter of him, she became one of Priam's numerous consorts:
Two were her sons; and both seem fated to fall by thy right-hand.
One already has perish'd, the godlike chief Polydorus;
Struck, 'mid the foremost ranks, by the terrible point of thy weapon.
And, much I fear, for myself, is my destiny near;—for I deem not
Now to escape thine hands; thus cast by a deity on them.
Yet let me add but a word; and, weighing it well in thy great breast,
Do not deprive me of life.—Mine was not the mother of Hector;
Hector, who slaughter'd thy comrade, thy gallant and gentle companion."

Thus did Priam's son plead hard with the hero; entreating,
Using pitiful words; but stern was the terrible answer.

"Fool! Talk not, unto me, of redemption, or speak of a ransom!
Time has been—'twas of yore, ere fate had o'ertaken Patroclus—
When I was wont to relent; and my soul had a pleasure in sparing
Trojan youths: and many I captured alive, and I sold them.
Now, not a Trojan escapes; whosoever he be whom the God throws
Into mine hands in fight, under Ilion. None of the Trojans
Ever evades me again; least of all, does an offspring of Priam.
Die then, my friend! with the rest. What availeth this pitiful wailing?
Even Patroclus died:—far better and braver than thou art!—
Look on myself!—Am I not very comely to view, and majestic?
Sprung from a hero-sire: a Goddess-mother has borne me.
Even for *me* does the hour of Death, and of Fate unresisted,
Surely approach—be it morn, be it eve, or the height of the noontide—
When, some unknown foe, will deprive me of life in the combat;
Either by stroke of spear, or by shaft sent afar from the bowstring."

Thus, as the hero spake, fail'd knees and heart in the stripling.

Slid from the spear his grasp; and he sank down, spreading his pale hands,
Open[d].—Achilleus, drawing the sharp sword forth from the scabbard,
Struck at his collar-bone; and the broad-blade, cleaving the white neck,
Buried deep in his chest: so he sank on his back, and, extended,
Lay stretch'd out at length; and the earth grew damp with his dark blood.
Seizing the corpse, by the foot, did Achilleus into the torrent
Cast it: and wingèd words thus utter'd of terrible boasting.

"There! find resting-place, 'mid the fish of the stream!—On thy wide wound,
Unconcern'd, their mouths will suck at the gore;—for thy mother
Ne'er may lament her son, outstretch'd on his bier; but Scamander
Fast, on his whirling waves, shall bear thee away to the ocean.
Many a fish, as the stream flows onward in darkening ripples,
Rising, darts to the feast, and to taste the white fat of Lycaon.
Such be the doom of all; till Ilion's sacred rampart
Stop your headlong flight, and the onset of me the pursuer.
Little avails you, at present, your river of silvery eddies,
Wide-extended stream: you have, all unavailingly, slaughter'd
Bulls, untold, and hurl'd proud chargers alive in the torrent.
Now, not the less, shall ye perish; till all of you make full atonement
Both for Patroclus' death, and the blood of the sons of Achaia,
Whom ye have slain by the ships, in the time of my absence from battle."

Thus did the hero speak. Full wroth was the God of the River.
Much did he ponder in heart how best to put check on Achilleus;

[d] There are, perhaps, few more remarkable or painful passages in the Iliad than the present: but it would be a mistake to regard the slaughter of Lycaon as a proof of exceptional or unnatural ferocity in Homer's favorite hero. It is evident, from the terms in which he addresses him, that he entertains some feeling of pity for Lycaon:—but Patroclus is dead, and no Trojan—least of all a son of Priam—can be exempted from slaughter. And why should any one so shrink from a fate which was good enough for Patroclus? Or why should he himself abstain from taking life, when he—Goddess-born—is, by his voluntary choice, so soon to lose it?

End his warlike toil, and destruction avert from the Trojans.
Meanwhile Peleus' son, his right hand shaking his jav'lin,
Sprang, all mad for his death, to do battle with Asteropæus ;
Pelagon's gallant son : he was son of a wide-flowing river,
Axius ; borne to the God by the great Akesamenus' daughter,
Eldest in birth, Peribæa ; her son by the deep-whirling torrent.
Him did Achilleus charge ; and the foe, springing up from the river,
Stood, with two bright spears, to await the encounter : for Xanthus
Breath'd high courage within him :—the God was enraged for the youths slain,
Heap'd in the river's bed, by Achilleus' merciless falchion.
So, when approaching nearer, the chiefs stood fronting together ;
First to address his foe was the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"What man, and whence, art thou—that venturest thus to oppose me ?
Hapless sires are they, whose sons confront me in battle."

Then, in reply to the chief, spake Pelagon's valorous offspring.

"Why, thus, ask of my race ? magnanimous issue of Peleus !
Far from my native home, from Pæonia's fertile valleys,
Arm'd with lances long, have I led my Pæonian spearmen,
Unto the Ilian wall : it is ten days since we arrived there.
And I deduce my descent from Axius, wide-flowing river ;
Axius, fairest stream, that flows with the purest of water.
Pelagon, famed with the spear, was the son of the stream ; I am reckon'd
Son of the chief.—'Tis time that we combat—redoubted Achilleus !"

Threat'ning, the hero spake. Uplifted, the mighty Achilleus,
Peleus' ashen spear.—Two lances from Asteropæus
Flew, at once, on his foe ; for two right-hands had the hero.
One, on Achilleus' shield struck fair and true, but it pierced not
Through the immortal buckler, but hung in the midst of the gold-plate[e].

[e] The middle plate of the shield. See Il. xx, v. 272.

One, with the point, just grazed on his right arm, under the elbow.
Forth did the dark blood spirt[f]; and the javelin, flying beyond him,
Stood, deep-rooted in earth; unflesh'd, disappointed of carnage.
Fiercely, at Asteropæus, in turn, from the arm of Pelides,
Started his ashen spear, straight-flying, athirst for his foe's life:
Yet did it err from the foe: in the high-swelling bank, in his rearward,
Stood implanted the spear;—to its half-length deeply imbedded.
Then, from his thigh, forth-drawing his broad sharp falchion, Achilleus,
Furious, sprang on the Trojan; and he was attempting, with strong hand,
Shaking the spear of Pelides, to tear it away from the steep bank;
Thrice did he strive, and desist: collecting his strength, for the fourth time,
Bending down, he attempted to sever the shaft;—but his life fled
'Mid the attempt; for the sword of Achilleus fatally on him
Fell, and gash'd him across; from the wide wound tumbled the entrails
On to the ground at his feet, and the darkness of death overshadow'd
All his gasping form: and Achilleus sprang on his broad breast,
Tearing the armor away, as he utter'd his fierce exultation.

"Lie thou there! Though thy birth be derived from a stream, as thou sayest,
Hard and unequal the combat for thee with the sons of Cronïon.
Thou but claimest descent from the God of a wide-flowing River;
I, in return, can boast for my own first ancestor great Zeus.
For I am son of a man, wide-ruling the Myrmidon nation,
Peleus, Æacus' son; and of Æacus Zeus was the parent.
Even as Zeus surpasses the Rivers, rolling to seaward,
So does the race of Zeus take precedence of that of the Rivers.
Were such succor availing, a great River flowing beside thee
Might have afforded aid;—but he fear'd to encounter Cronïon.
Not as the equal of Zeus is the regal stream Acheloïs;
Nor is the mighty strength of the deep-flowing Ocean, his equal;
Sire universal of streams, of the wide extent of the blue seas,
And of the gushing springs, and all deep fountains of waters:

[f] The fable of Achilles being invulnerable is of course of later date than Homer.

Yet even *he* feels dread when great Zeus launches the lightning;
Quakes at the thunder-peal, as it terribly rolls in the heavens."

Thus did the hero speak; and then from the bank drew his strong spear;
Leaving his foeman's corpse on the spot where he yielded his great soul,
Stretch'd, as he fell, on the sands;—dark rippled the wash of the waters,
Over the corpse; and eels, and fishes, came gathering round it,
Thronging in shoals to a meal, to a feast on the fat of a hero.
Then, did Achilleus charge the Pæonians, crested with horsehair,
Scattering now in dismay, 'mid the whirling river; astounded,
Seeing the best of their host overthrown, and worsted in stern fight
Under the hand of Pelides, and slain by his terrible falchion.
Mydon then did he slaughter, Thersilochus also, and Mnesus;
Ænius, Thrasius too, and Astypylus, and Ophelestes;
And of Pæonian chiefs yet more had been slain by Achilleus,
Had not the whirling River arisen in anger to warn him,
Cloth'd in human form, and spake from the lowest abysses.

"Great is thy prowess, Achilles! and more than the deeds of a mortal,
Are thine acts, abhorr'd; for the great Gods ever protect thee.
Yet, if Cronïon give all Trojan lives to the slaughter,
Slay not the victims on *me!*—Do the butchery out on the wide plain.
E'en as it is, my streams are choked by the masses of corpses;
Nor, in my wonted course, can I flow, as of yore, to the deep sea;
Fill'd, as I am, with the dead. And still thou'rt ruthlessly slaying!
Rest content, and refrain!—I am horrified, leader of nations!"

Then, in reply to the River, the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"So let it even be, as thou sayest, O mighty Scamander!
When—but not until—I have slaughter'd the arrogant Trojans;
Or, to the wall of the city, have driven the hosts, and have tested
Hector's strength in fight;—whether he or myself may be victor."

Thus did the hero speak, and he charged, like a God, upon Troy's host.
Then did the River address, from its deep-whirling eddies, Apollo.

"God of the silver bow! great issue of Zeus! of the mandates
Given to thee by Cronïon, how few are receiving fulfilment!
Straightly and long he commanded to stand by the Trojans, and aid them,
Until the evening sank, and shadow'd the face of the rich earth."

Thus as the River spake, did Achilleus spring from the high bank
Into the midst of the stream. Then, the stream, collecting its waters,
All its affluent rills, rose mightily on him: the corpses,
Floating in numbers around, of the dead who were slain by Achilleus,
These the indignant River, with bellowing sounds, as a wild bull,
Cast on the banks; and, safe in the depths of its hidden recesses,
Down in the deep abysses, conceal'd and assisted the living.
Dreadfully then did the billows encircle Achilles; the swoll'n wave
Fell, with a dash, on his buckler: in vain he attempted to steady
Feet, fast slipping away. He an elm-tree grappled with both hands;
Full-grown, stalwart stem; but the tree, torn out by its long roots,
Carried the bank down with it, and choked, with the spread of its branches,
All of the flowing waves:—and the stream bridged solidly over,
Falling in midst of the channel.—He, swift, from the ponded waters[g]
Leap'd, and rush'd to escape, flying over the plain on his swift feet,
Terrified: nor did the God thus cease from attack; but pursued him,
Curling his blackening billows, ambitious to shorten the labors,
Thus, of the mighty Achilles,—averting the fate of the Trojans.
Onward Pelides rush'd; as it were for the cast of a jav'lin;
Rush'd, as an eagle swoops, dark-plumaged, hunter of wild-game;
Known, amid feather'd tribes, as the strongest and swiftest of all birds.
Like unto it did he rush; and loud, as he bounded, the bright brass
Clatter'd and clang'd on his breast: and he ever, evading on one side,

[g] This, although often objected to, seems to be the correct reading. The stream was temporarily obstructed by the elm-tree; and the water was ponded behind it.

Fled from the stream, which came with a hoarse din rolling behind him.
As when, cutting a channel from some dark fountain, a peasant
Guides to his plants and garden the gurgling stream; and conducts it,
Clearing the cuts with his spade, and removing impediments from them;
And, as the stream rolls on, are the pebbles noisily scatter'd
By the advancing water; and when it arrives at a steep place,
Rolling rapidly downward, it distances e'en its conductor;
So, did the river-wave incessantly follow Achilleus,
Swift as he was in flight:—but Gods are greater than mortals.
Oft, as the godlike chief turn'd round with a fierce resolution,
There to withstand the attack, and to try if, amid the Immortals,
All of the Gods who inhabit the broad sky sought to affright him,
E'en so oft did the River, its force collecting, a great wave
Dash down, striking his shoulders: he sprang with his feet to escape it,
Sore distraught in mind:—then the River, gliding beneath him,
Slacken'd his wearied knees, and the soil wash'd from under his footsteps.
Then did Pelides groan, and spake as he look'd to the broad skies.

"O Father Zeus! will none of the Deities pity and save me
From this stream's assault?—and then let me die as I must die!
Heaviest cause of complaint, amid all of the race of Olympus,
Rests on my mother dear; who has sooth'd me with idle pretences.
She foretold my fall by the quick sharp shafts of Apollo,
Slain at the foot of the wall of the Trojans gleaming in armor.
Would I might fall by the weapon of Hector, the bravest among them;
Dying a hero's death, and slain by the hand of a hero!
Now, by a wretch'd end, do I come to my doom, overwhelm'd thus
Under a swollen river;—the death of a stripling swineherd,
Swept by the winter's rain from his feet when attempting a torrent."

Thus he lamented: in haste did Poseidon and Pallas Athène
Stand by the hero's side; though veil'd in the likeness of mortals:
Grasp'd his hand in theirs, and plighted words of assurance.
First to address the chief was the great earth-shaker, Poseidon.

"Take courage, Peleus' son! and be not scared, or dishearten'd.
Two of the Gods are here, come down from on high to assist thee:
Come, with approval of Zeus—myself and Pallas Athène.
Know, it is not thy fate to submit to the might of a River!
Quickly his force shall fail; thyself shall speedily see it.
But this advice do we proffer, and carefully hear it and heed it!
Stay not thou thine hand from the work of the levelling battle,
Till, of the Trojan host, whosoever escapes, thou hast coop'd up
Safe in the Ilian wall;—and then is the conquest of Hector:
Then a return to the ships.—Such glory we purpose to give thee."

Such were the words of the Gods, and they went to the homes of Immortals.
He—for the message divine had inspired a new resolution—
Held on his course in the plain, now fill'd with the great inundation.
Thickly around were rolling the arms of the slain; and the corpses
Floated about in numbers; and meeting the rush of the waters,
Fairly ahead, his knees yet he carried aloft: and the great stream
Fail'd to subdue his force; such a helper was Pallas Athène.

Nor did Scamander, thus, from his efforts desist: but his wrath rose
Fiercer on Peleus' son; and again, with a mightier effort,
Mounted his crested waves; and to Simois loudly he shouted.

"Help me, my brother beloved! We perchance may be able, united,
Yet to restrain this man; lest he capture the city of Priam,
Speedily, and Troy's sons be unable to tarry his onslaught.
Hasten, and give me assistance! from all of thy fountains of waters
Fill up thy streams to the brim, and call to thine affluent rivers.
Pile up a mighty wave, and gather, in masses, behind it,
Trunks of trees, and stones; that so may we stop in his daring
Yonder savage hero, who matches his might with the great Gods.
Little his strength in fight, and little his beauty will aid him,
Little his shining arms; far down will they lie in the deep pool,

Cover'd in ooze and mud; and beneath it the hero, his great self
There will I overwhelm; drift sand, and accumulate gravel
Countless above his corpse: and bewilder the sons of Achaia,
Searching to find his bones; 'mid the mighty deposit above them.
There, as he dies, will his tomb be erected at once; and Achaia,
Giving him funeral rites, may dispense with a tumulus o'er him."

Speaking, he curl'd his waves, and rush'd in his rage on Achilleus;
Roaring; with foam, and gore, and floating masses of corpses.
Darkly the purple wave of the Zeus-born River, descending,
Beat on Pelides' breast, and bore him away in the current.
Hère cried out aloud, for she dreadfully fear'd for Achilleus,
Lest in its whirling eddies the River should master the hero.
And, in alarm, she exclaim'd to her own son, mighty Hephæstus.

"Up, to the battle, my son! Slow-footed, in sooth; yet we deem'd thee
Mated in fight, e'en now, with Xanthus whirling in eddies.
Give thine aid in haste; and call to appearance a fierce blaze!
Zephyrus, I will invoke, and Notus, raiser of white foam;
And, from the dark sea's breast, will I bring up a terrible tempest,
Bearing thy fierce flame on, to demolish the slain of the Trojans,
Corpses and armor alike; and do thou on the margin of Xanthus
Burn up the trees, and, scorching the River himself, be averted,
Neither by words of persuasion, nor yet by the fury of curses:
Still persevere; nor consent to relinquish attack, ere a signal
Comes from myself to desist: and then check the fierce conflagration."

Thus did the Goddess speak; and Hephæstus lighted a fierce flame.
First, what lay on the plain, did the God consume; and the corpses
Burnt, that were lying in plenty; the dead, that were slain by Achilleus.
Soon was the plain dried up, and the pride of the water abated.
E'en as a northern wind, in the autumn, dries up an orchard,
Flooded of late by the waters, and gladdens the heart of the owner;
So, was the whole plain dried; and so were the piles of the corpses

Burnt; and the God then turn'd the resplendent flame on the River.
Osiers, and flowering reeds, and the tamarisks, sink in the bright blaze;
Lotus, and rushes too, and the cypresses crumble in ashes:
Trees, by the beautiful streams, that flourish'd, and grew in abundance.
Eels and fishes next, in the watery depths were afflicted:
Darting hither and thither, they dived in the shallowing waters;
Scorch'd by the fiery breath of the much-devising Hephæstus.
Shrunk was the strength of the River; and thus he address'd his opponent.

"None of the Gods can stand thine equal in battle, Hephæstus.
Neither can I endure, any longer, the flame and the burning.
Cease thine attack:—and, e'en as he will, let the mighty Achilleus
Drive Troy's sons from her wall!—What am I, that I strive to assist them?"

Thus spake the scorching River; his fair streams bubbling upward.
Even as placed on the top of a roaring fire, a caldron,
Fill'd with the melted lard of a fat swine daintily nurtured,
Bubbles on every side, as the dry logs kindle beneath it;
So were the streams scorch'd up by the blaze; and bubbled the water,
All unable to flow, for the current was stopp'd; and the hot blast,
Sent by the might of Hephæstus, exhausted the River: to Hère
Next did he turn, and address her; and utter a long supplication.

"Hère! why upon me, any more than the rest, has thine offspring
Pour'd his destroying wrath? I am not so guilty as they are,
All of the other Gods who unite to give aid to the Trojans.
As for myself, their cause, at thy word, I agree to relinquish:
Only restrain my assailant: and here, with an oath, do I promise,
Never, again, their fate to avert from the heads of the Trojans;
Not when Troy herself shall be wrapt in the flames; and the whole town
Rise in fires, lit up by the warlike sons of Achaia."

Thus did he speak; and his prayer was heard by the white-arm'd Hère:
And she at once thus spake to her own dear son, to Hephæstus.

"Stay thy consuming hand, ever-glorious son! It befits not,
Thus, in the cause of mortals, to press, so sore, an Immortal."

Thus did the Goddess speak; and Hephæstus extinguish'd the fierce flame.
Soon in the wonted channels were flowing the wandering waters.
And when Xanthus sank, both he and his mighty opponent
Rested: for Hèrè's wrath, though excited, knew an abatement.

But, 'mid the rest of the Gods, meanwhile, was a struggle commencing;
Furious, all-consuming:—their minds were divided in two parts:
And, with a terrible clamor, they mingled in fight; and the broad earth
Shook; and the heavens resounded, as if to a trumpet; and great Zeus
Seated, at ease on Olympus, complacently gazed on the fierce strife;
Pleased, in heart, at the sight of the Gods thus meeting in combat.
Not long stood they asunder; for Àres—breaker-of-bucklers—
Led the attack for Troy, and, singling Pallas Athène,
Levell'd his brazen spear; and insultingly spake, as he charged her.

"Wherefore, pestilent thing[h], thus again drive Gods into combat,
With thy portentous pride, and audacity ne'er to be sated?
Dost not remember the time when Tydeus' son, Diomedes,
Ventured to wound myself, and by thy instigation, directing
Full upon *me* his spear, and visibly rending my fair flesh?—
Now has the season arrived of requital for all of thine ill-deeds."

Thus did the War-God speak, and then on the full-fringed buckler—
Terrible orb, from which glides even the thunder of great Zeus—
Àres, lover of carnage, his long lance drove, but prevail'd not.
Yielding a step, as retreating, the Goddess heaved in her strong hand—
Dark as it lay on the plain, and of rugged dimensions—a huge stone,
Placed, in days gone by, as a boundary-mark, 'mid the plough'd land:
With it she Àres struck on the neck, and she loosen'd his great limbs.

[h] Literally a dog-fly. The same expression is repeated, intentionally, by Hèrè; *infrà*, v. 420.

Acres seven he press'd, as he lay with his hair in the dark dust;
Sounded his arms on the God.—Then, smilingly, Pallas Athène
Boasted her foe's overthrow, and rapidly spake, and address'd him.

"Fool!—Hast not yet known what vigor I boast of, in combat?
What is my martial might—that thou venturest thus to oppose me?
Thus thou'rt fated to bear of thy mother the virulent curses;
She, who, enraged at thy deeds, now schemes for thee ill, since Achaia
Owns thine aid no longer, reserved for the arrogant Trojans."

Thus did the Goddess speak; and averted her radiant eyeballs.
Him, laying hold of his hand, did the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite,
Lead away, heavily groaning; the life scarce beating within him.
Soon was the action mark'd by the white-arm'd beautiful Hère.
She, with wingèd words, thus rapidly spake to Athène.

"Child of the Ægis-arm'd!—of Zeus!—mark well, Atrytòne!
Some other pestilent thing[i] is conducting the homicide Àres,
From the destroying war, thro' the tumult of fight.—Overtake them!"

Thus did the Goddess speak; and Athène follow'd, exulting.
Laying a powerful hand on her bosom, she thrust Aphrodìte
Down; and her knees gave way, and fainted the heart in her fair breast.
Stretch'd on the fertile earth, side by side, lay his helper, and Àres.
Over the vanquish'd pair thus vaunts the victorious Goddess.

"Like to this couple, be all of the Gods who give aid to the Trojans;
When they oppose in battle the cuirass'd ranks of the Argives;
Bold in attack and persistent in combat, as proves Aphrodìte,
When she opposes me, and gives aid in the battle to Àres.
Were it but so, long since, would the war that we waged have been ended;
Troy's proud bulwarks storm'd; and her city consign'd to destruction."

See note, v. 393.

Thus did Athène speak: fair Hère smiled in approval.
Then to Apollo, thus, came a challenge from King Enosicthon.

"Phœbus! Why stand *we*, thus, apart in the battle?—We ought not
Unto the other Gods thus to yield a precedence.—'Twere shameful,
If, with strength untried, we return'd to the mansion of great Zeus.
Strike thou first! as becometh thy younger age. It beseems not
Me, who am elder born, and of wider knowledge than thou art.
Fool! What senseless heart is conceal'd in thy breast:—to remember
Nought of the evil things that we two, alone of the great Gods,
Bore, beside Ilium's wall; to Laomedon, arrogant monarch,
Sent, by command of Zeus; for a whole year fated to serve him,
Though for a stated hire; and he, as a master, employ'd us!—
I, for the sons of Troy, encircled the town with a rampart,
Broad, and exceeding fair—to engird an impregnable fortress.
Thou, amid Ida's slopes, many-folded, shaggy with dense woods,
Pastured the herds of the monarch, the droves of his curly-horn'd oxen.
But, when the laughing Hours brought on the glad season for payment,
—All our toil completed—Laomedon, truculent monarch,
Fiercely refused our hire; with terrible threats he dismiss'd us:
E'en our hands and feet underneath us to bind, did the proud king
Threaten, and ship us away to some far-off-inhabited islands:
Threatening, also, to shorten the ears of us both, with the sharp shears.
So that, in soreness of heart, we departed from Troy: disappointed;
Cheated of that reward which he promised at first, but denied us.
Is it for deeds such as this that thou favorest Troy? and abidest
Far from the ranks of *us*, who for ever are scheming, the Trojans,
—Them, their babes, and wives—may be whelm'd in an utter destruction?"

Then, to Poseidon, thus spake the far-darting monarch, Apollo.

"Reft of my wonted sense should I surely be, Ennosigaios!
—Even thyself wouldst say—if I battled with thee for the wretched
Race of mortal men:—evanescent as leaves; who, at one time,

Flourish, as full of life, consuming the fruits of the broad earth:
Speedily then dried up, and fading away.—Let us move off,
With all haste, from fight—and leave to the others the combat!"

Thus did Apollo speak, then retreated; and shunn'd to encounter
His own father's brother, confronting the force of his right-hand.
Him, did his Goddess-sister, fair Artemis, beautiful huntress,
View as he fled from the battle; and, tauntingly, thus she address'd him.

"Fli'st thou thus, Ecaergus? And leavest thus to Poseidon
Victory undisputed; and cause for impertinent boasting?
Fool! why carriest thou that useless bow on thy shoulders?
Never again let me hear that voice in the halls of thy father,
Boasting, as oft it boasted, in face of the Gods, the Immortals,
Of thy resolve to encounter the mighty Poseidon in battle."

Thus did the Goddess speak; but the far-darting monarch replied not.
Then, in her anger fierce, did the beautiful consort of great Zeus
Rail at the Archress-Goddess, and taunt her with bitter revilings.

"Shameless thing, as thou art! What impudence now has impell'd thee,
Thus, in the face of myself?—Thou'lt find me a heavy opponent,
Spite of thy bow and shafts; though Zeus has imposed—as a wild beast—
Thee, among helpless women, to slay as thy pleasure impels thee.
Sooth, 'tis an easier thing on the mountain to slaughter the wild beasts,
Slaying the woodland stags, than to strive with thy betters in battle.
But if to mingle in war be the wish of thy heart, let me teach thee
How much stronger am I, how unequal thy might to oppose me."

Thus did Hère speak; and both wrists seized with the left hand,
Snatching away with the right, from her shoulders, the bow and the arrows:
These, with derisive smiles, she applied to her ears; as the Goddess
Tried to avert her head;—from the quiver tumbled the swift shafts.

Sideways, flooded in tears, did the Goddess escape, as a ring-dove
Flies from a hawk's sharp claws, and escapes to the depths of a cavern,
Deep in the rift of a rock—not destined as yet for destruction.
Thus, fast weeping, she fled, and deserted her bow and her arrows.

Then unto Leto thus spake Hermes, slayer-of-Argus.

"Leto! battle with thee is a thing I decline. 'Tis a hard task
Thus to encounter the consorts of Zeus, great roller-of-storm-clouds.
Go, then! vaunt at thy pleasure, and tell it in face of the great Gods;
Boast of the conquest won by thy prowess and strength over Hermes!"

Such were the words of the God: and then, 'mid the cloud of the dust-storm,
Leto gather'd the bow and the shafts, scatter'd hither and thither;
Gather'd, and bore them away, and restored them again to her daughter.
She fled away to Olympus, and enter'd the mansion of great Zeus,
Still dissolved in tears, and she sat on the knees of her father;
All her ambrosial robe yet trembled around her: Cronïon
Clasp'd her close, and demanded;—with sweet smile looking upon her.

"Who, 'mid the heavenly race, has so evil entreated my dear child?
Treated unworthily thus; as it were, an admitted offender?"

Then to the God in reply spake the bright-crown'd Queen of the wood-chase.

"Hère, white-arm'd Goddess, thine own spouse, Father! has struck me:
Constant source, as she is, of disturbance and strife to Immortals."

Thus did the heavenly twain hold converse, one with the other.
Meanwhile, sacred Troy was re-enter'd by Phœbus Apollo,
Anxious to succor the wall of the well-built town; and defend it,
Lest, though fate forebade, it to-day should be storm'd by the Argives.

While, of the rest of the Gods, who for ever endure, to Olympus,
These sore grieved and abash'd, and those in the glory of triumph,
Went; and sat them down in the presence of Zeus.—But Achilleus
Bore on, slaughtering Troy; men and horses falling before him.
As when the curling smoke mounts up in a pile to the broad skies,
From some burning town, where the wrath of the Gods has descended,
Labor imposing on all, and loss on the mass of its people;
Not less labor and loss upon Troy was imposed by Achilleus.

Priam, ancient king, on the heav'n-built height of her bulwarks
Stood: and at last he discern'd the redoubted Achilles: before him
Troy's hosts, e'en as he turn'd, rush'd, routed in heaps; and their courage
Fled: to the earth, with groans, does the king descend, from the ramparts,
Passes along by the wall, giving charge to the valorous gate-wards.

"Hold ye, the gates in hand, wide open awhile—till the people,
Flying, have shelter'd themselves in the walls of the city.—Achilleus
Presses the broken rear; and I dread, for the host, a disaster.
When they are safely housed, and are breathing again in the town-wall,
Fasten, again, with speed, our gates so firmly compacted.
Much do I fear, the destroyer may enter the town with the vanquish'd."

Thus did he speak; they unbolted, and open'd the portals, revealing
Light[k], and safety at once to the fugitive host. But Apollo
Rush'd to encounter the foe, and destruction avert from the Trojans.
They to the city's wall, to the line of her towering ramparts,
Parch'd with fiery thirst, half-stifled in dust, from the wide plain
Fled;—while close in the rear was the spear of Pelides; his bosom
Fill'd with relentless fury, and lust unabated for glory.
Then would Troy's high gates have been storm'd by the sons of Achaia;
Had not Phœbus Apollo incited the mighty Agenor;
Valorous stalwart chief, the redoubtable son of Antenor.

[k] There seems to be the double idea; of the streak of light gleaming through the opening gates, emblematical of safety to the routed troops.

Breathing within his bosom a stout resolution; the God stood
Near him, prompt to avert Death's dense hand raised to assail him;
Leaning his weight on a beech; invisible, shrouded in vapors.
Then did the chief, recognising Achilleus, waster of cities,
Stand dismay'd; and much was his spirit troubled within him.
Sorely disturb'd at heart, thus he communed alone in his great breast.

"Woe to myself!—The attempt were in vain to escape from Achilleus
Where yon broken host flies, roll'd in confusion before him.
Me, as them, would he seize, and massacre as unresisting.
What, if I here let the vanquish'd remain to their fate, with the victor,
Peleus' offspring, Achilles; and, trusting my feet, from the ramparts
Fly to the Ilian plain, far away from the city—attaining
Ida's woodland glades, and the twofold sources of waters?
Thence, when eve descends, having bath'd in the river, and wash'd off
Dust and sweat of battle, returning again to the town-wall[l]——
But what purpose serves it to commune within, and to scheme thus?—
Surely the foe will perceive me attempting to fly to the open;
And, by his speed of foot, overtake me with ease, and destroy me.
No way therefore remains to escape from Death, and the dark Fates.
So much in fields of fight does his prowess exceed that of all men.
What if I venture to stand in the sight of the town, and confront him?—
Flesh has he, e'en like mine—to be wounded[m], if touch'd by my spear-point—
One life only is his—and if fame be correct, he is mortal;
Graced though he be, as Cronïon accumulates glory upon him."

Then he collected his strength, and awaited Achilles; his great heart
Firmly resolved for fight, and to venture the perilous combat.
Just as a panther springs from her lair, in the depths of the forest,
Forth, to encounter the strength of the hunter's arm;—and she quails not,

[l] Agenor here breaks off in the middle of a sentence; as if recollecting the improbability of the plan succeeding.

[m] See *suprà*, v. 167.

Feels not a whit dismay'd, at the gathering cry of the fierce hounds;
Nor if the hunter's spear, intercepts her attack, with a close thrust,
Or with a distant wound, transfix'd as she is by the weapon,
Yet does she struggle to close with her foe, or to perish upon him;
Thus, did Antènor's offspring, the godlike leader Agènor,
Bravely decline to retreat, ere testing the strength of Achilleus.
Bearing before his breast his round shield, equal on all sides,
Marking the foe with his spear, with a loud-rais'd voice he address'd him.

"High are the hopes inflating thy bosom, redoubted Achilleus!
Deeming that Troy's proud town this day will lie vanquish'd before thee.
Fool! long series of woes will be borne ere that end is accomplish'd.
In her yet may be found stout warriors, many and valiant,
Ready to fight for her wall, in defence of our parents and spouses,
Homes and infants dear:—but *thou* shalt perish before her,
Fierce as thou art in fight, and redoubtable soldier in battle."

Speaking, with powerful hand he a sharp spear cast at the hero;
Nor with imperfect aim; for he struck on the greave, by the knee-joint.
Loud, on the warrior's leg, did the greave, new-fashion'd in bright tin,
Sound, as the spear-point struck; but, afar from the armor, the jav'lin
Leap'd, nor pierced it through; and was stay'd by the gift of Hephæstus.
Then, on his godlike foe, on the mighty Agènor, Pelides
Rush'd; but the glory expected was snatch'd from his grasp, for Apollo
Carried the Trojan off—dense vapors rolling around him:
Sending him, safe and sound, to return at his ease from the battle.
Peleus' son did he then by a stratagem turn from the people;
For, the far-darting God, assuming the form of Agènor,
Fled, from the feet of Achilles; who rush'd on, hot to pursue him.
Soon did he chase the God from the plain, once heavy in corn-fields,
Turning his course to the stream of Scamander, rolling in eddies;
Ever a scanty space in advance of the chief; for Apollo
Guilefully lured him along, still hoping to win with his swift feet.
All this while to the town did the terrified crowds of the Trojans

Throng, right glad at heart; and the city was fill'd with the fliers.
No one dared to remain outside of the town and the ramparts,
There to await his friends, and to ascertain who was surviving,
Who had fallen in battle;—but all rush'd hastily onwards
Into the town—all those whose feet and knees had avail'd them.

BOOK THE TWENTY-SECOND.

Hector, thrice round Troy having fled, dies, slain by Achilleus.

THUS in the sacred town, like fawns, did the fugitives, herding,
Drink, and slake their thirst; and cool on their bodies the sweat-drops,
Leaning their wearied limbs on the buttress'd walls. The Achaians
Now drew near to the city; with bucklers slanted on shoulders.
Hector, alone of the host—for a Destiny cruel restrain'd him—
Stood at the Scæan gates, by himself, in the front of the bulwarks.
Then, to Pelides, thus spake, scornfully, Phœbus Apollo.

"Why, O Peleus' son! thus attempt, by the speed of thy swift feet,
Thou, mere mortal man, to give chase to a God?—apprehending
Not, that a God is here; and vain are thy furious efforts!
Now, no longer, it seems, with a thought for the terrified Trojans
—Saved in the town at last—thou wanderest hither at random.
Me, thou canst not slaughter—I am not fated to feel death."

Then, in his grievous wrath, spake the swift-footed leader, Achilleus.

"Deep is the wrong I sustain, at thy hands, most hostile of all Gods!
Turn'd thus away from the town by contrivance of thee!—But for thine act,
Many had bitten the dust, ere Ilion's wall had received them.
Great the renown, this day, thou'st pilfered from me; and deliver'd
All of my foes with ease; not fearing retributive vengeance.
Had I the power, as will, it soon would come heavily on thee!"

Thus did he speak, and again to the town strode haughtily onward,
Rushing along, as a steed who has carried the prize, with the chariot
Courses with ease on the plain, and stretches, careering, his swift limbs;
Not less easy and supple in movement, the limbs of Achilleus.

Priam's aged eyes were first, from the wall, to discern him,
Glittering over the plain.—As, mounting above the horizon,
Glows the Autumnal Star;—far-flashing, in bright scintillations,
Prominent over the rest of the stars that illumine the darkness.
Men, when naming the lights, have call'd it the Dog of Orion:
Brightest star in the sky, but of augury evil to mortals;
Herald of woe unto man—of the fiery heat, and the fever.
Such, as the warrior moved, on his breast was the flash of his cuirass.

Then, did the old man groan; and, with hands upraised to his hoar head,
Struck it, in anguish deep; and he burst into loud exclamations,
Mingled with groans; and entreated his son—who, in front of the portals,
Stood, with a stern resolution to wait for Achilles in battle.
Sad were the old man's words, as with outstretch'd hands he implored him.

"Hector, my own loved son! Stay not by thyself, to encounter
Yonder fearful man; lest fate come suddenly on thee,
Slain by the arm of Pelides!—for much is he stronger than thou art.
Ruthless man!—Oh! would he were loved but as much, by the great Gods,
As he is loved by myself!—Full soon, should the dogs and the vultures
Feed on his corpse; and relieve mine heart of its heavy affliction.
Many and brave are the sons of whom his arm has bereaved me!
Slain; or captured, and sold unto far-off-inhabited islands.
E'en now, two of my children, Lycaon and dear Polydorus,
Mine eyes fail to discern 'mid the crowds of the fugitive Trojans;
Sons of myself by Laòthoe, rear'd from her birth as a princess.
If yet alive they abide in the camp of the foe, to redeem them
Brass and gold shall be ready—we have it within, in abundance;

For, with an ample fortune, his daughter was portion'd by Altes[a].
But if, e'en now dead, they enter the mansions of Hades,
Deep is their mother's grief, and heavy their father's affliction:
Yet, will the sorrow be lighter, to all of the rest of the people,
Than for the death of thyself; shouldst thou fall, slain by Achilleus.
Enter again, then, the rampart, my own dear son!—to protect here,
Daughters and sons of Troy.—Add not to the fame of Pelides,
That of thine own defeat—and the loss of thy precious existence!
Yet more!—Pity thy father—unfortunate wretch—who retains yet
Sense of his hapless lot!—whom Zeus, at the limits of old-age,
Dooms to a grievous end, having look'd upon manifold evils:
Sons struck down and slain, and daughters borne off as captives;
Bridal chambers sack'd, and babes from the arms of the mothers
Torn, and dash'd upon earth, 'mid the wild confusion of carnage:
Daughters-in-law borne off by the ruthless hands of Achaians.
Even myself, at the last, will the dogs, in the front of my door-steps,
Hungrily tear for a meal, when stretch'd there, bloody and lifeless,
Slaughter'd by hostile steel, close-thrust or thrown from a distance:
Then, will the dogs that have fed at my table, and guarded my portals,
Lap their master's gore; and, incited by blood, fall upon him,
Stretch'd in his own doorway.—'Tis a posture becoming a young man,
Falling in gallant fight, when pierced by the spear of a foeman,
So to be stretch'd:—such a death has honor throughout to attend it.
But when the hoary head, and the hoary beard of the elder,
Go, with his corpse, to the dogs, and by them are dishonor'd and outraged;
No more pitiful fate ever waits on unfortunate mortals."

Thus did the old man speak; while speaking, his hands, from his temples,
Rending his locks of gray; yet he shook not the purpose of Hector.
Then did his mother commence, in tears, her turn of entreaty;
Spreading apart her vest, and baring her bosom before him:
While, as her tears ran down, with wingèd words she address'd him.

[a] Prince of Pedasus, and father of Laothòe; see Il. xxi, v. 87.

"Hector! my son! revere this bosom!—Have pity upon me!
Pity thy mother!—If ever her breasts once nourish'd and nursed thee,
Think upon them, upon her, dear child of my love!—And yon dread man
Meet, with a wall between!—Nor venture, unguarded, to face him.
Cruel!—Suppose thee dead—yet I ne'er should be able to mourn thee,
—Thee, my son! mine own!—bright shoot of thy stock!—on thy death-bed;
Nor will thy wife, much-endow'd, mourn over her lord:—both afar off,
Dogs will tear those limbs, by the side of the ships of the Argives."

Thus did the weeping pair both speak to their son, and entreat him,
Much, with pleading words; yet shook not the purpose of Hector.
He stood firm and awaited the fearful approach of Achilleus.
E'en as a mountain-serpent abides, in its den, the assailant,
Fed upon pois'nous herbs, and fierce is the anger within it,
Dreadfully glaring abroad, as its coils wind round in the covert;
Thus, in the might of his strength, did Hector remain, nor retreated;
Leaning his shining shield on a jutting ledge of the buttress;
And, sore troubled within, thus communed alone with his great heart.

"Ah me! what is the best?—If I enter the gates, and the ramparts,
First, as I pass within, will Polydamas meet, and reproach me;
He, who implored me to shelter my Trojan troops in the town wall,
That last fatal night when again rose mighty Achilleus.
Him I refused to obey:—'twere better, by far, had I done so.—
Now, as my troops have died—and the cause is my arrogant folly—
Much do I fear Troy's sons, and the long-robed dames of the Trojans,
Lest some man may say,—though unworthy to rank as mine equal,—
'Hector, trusting his might, self-confident, ruined his people.'
Thus, will the Trojans speak.—'Twere better, by far, I encounter
Boldly Achilleus' arm, and either return, having slain him,
Or overthrown by him die a glorious death in the town's sight.
What, on the other hand, if my well-boss'd shield I relinquish,
Doff this pond'rous helm, and deposit my spear by the rampart,
And, unarm'd and alone, thus appeal to the mighty Achilleus?

Promise to yield up Helen ; and yield up the plunder'd possessions :
All, whatsoever it be, Alexander brought in his galleys,
Unto the shores of Troy—the beginning and cause of the warfare—
Give unto Atreus' sons, to be carried away ;—and Achaia
Largely enrich from all of the wealth that the city containeth :
Binding the men of Troy, by an oath to be sworn by her elders,
Nothing is kept conceal'd, but whatever the beautiful fortress
Owns, of stored-up wealth, is submitted to equal division ?——
But to what purpose, thus, do I move such projects within me ?—
If I approach him thus, yet he will not have pity upon me,
Nor will respect my prayers—but, unarm'd as I am, and defenceless,
Slay me—as if but a woman—deprived of my armor's protection.—
'Tis not, at present, as if, under shade of an oak, or a great rock,
We, like maiden and youth, were to hold sweet converse together ;
—Youth and maiden, meeting in converse, one with the other—
Better it were at once to encounter in strife !—We may know then,
Speedily, which of the twain the Olympian destines for glory."

Thus did he muse, yet remain. Meanwhile drew near him Achilleus,
Dreadful as Ares' self, when arm'd and helm'd for the battle.
Over his strong right shoulder he brandish'd the Pelian jav'lin—
Huge and dreadful beam—and the gleam of his armor around him
Flash'd, like blazing fire, or the rays of the Sun, when he rises.
Hector, at that dread sight, with a panic was stricken ; and durst not
Longer remain ; but he fled, all in terror, afar from the portals.
Onward, with active feet, in pursuit rush'd mighty Pelides.
As from a mountain-cliff, when a falcon, swiftest of all birds,
Floats, upon easy[b] wing, in pursuit of a trembling wild-dove,
Flying, below, in her fear,—and the hawk, from above, shrill-screaming,
Swoops, from time to time, in his eager endeavors to clutch her ;
Not less eager the chief swoop'd straight at his foeman ; and Hector,
Under the walls of Troy, fled, plying the joints of his swift limbs :
Hard by the watch-tow'r's height, where the fig-tree waves in the breezes,

[b] The motion of a hawk's wings is often scarcely perceptible.

Over the beaten road, they dash'd on under the ramparts,
Till they arrived at the springs of the fair-flowing waters—the fountains,
Pouring, from double sources, the eddying river Scamander.
One in a heated stream flows bubbling forth; and above it
Ever the vapor rises, as smoke ascends from the bright blaze.
One to the light of day bursts forth as cold as the hailstone,
Or as the frozen snow, or as water congeal'd into crystal.
There were the washing-troughs constructed by side of the fountains;
Fair, and of sculptured stone; there oft were the radiant garments
Wash'd, by the wives of Troy, and the beautiful maids of the Trojans,
Erst, in the days of her peace, ere Achaia's sons had arrived there.
There did the twain hold on—one in flight—one pressing behind him—
Mighty the chief who fled—far mightier he, the pursuer:
Swift was the race; for the prize was no fed victim, or bull's-hide;
Such as, in solemn games, is the victor's reward in the foot-race—
It was the life of Hector—the tamer-of-steeds—that was run for.
Just as at funeral games when the hoofs of the firm-footed chargers,
Victors before in the strife, speed rapidly over the race-course,
Enter'd for noble prize;—either tripod, or beautiful damsel;
So, upon flying feet, thrice circled the city of Priam
That contending pair:—and the Gods all gazed to behold them.
First to address them all, was the Father of men and Immortals.

"It is a man, ye Gods! right dear to myself, that mine eyes see,
Chaced round yonder walls; and my bosom is melted with pity,
Gazing on Hector's distress:—full many the thighs of fat oxen,
Burnt by the chief to myself, on the deep-folded ranges of Ida,
Or on the city's heights.—Now, chaced by the mighty Achilleus,
Speeding on flying feet, he encircles the city of Priam.
Therefore, resolve, O Gods! and consider it well, and determine,
Whether to save this man from his imminent doom; or to leave him,
Good as he is, to be slain by the arm of Pelides Achilleus."

Then unto Zeus, in reply, spake the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène.

"God of the lightning-flash! dark roller of storms! What a project!
Mortal man, as he is, long fated and doom'd to destruction,
Wouldst thou bear him away, and redeem him, at last, from the death-stroke?
Do it! if such be thy will.—But the rest of the Gods will applaud not."

Then, in reply to the Goddess, spake Zeus, great whirler-of-storm-clouds.

"Be not disturb'd, dear child!—For my purpose, O Tritogeneia!
Is not as hard as my words; and to thee am I ever indulgent.
Act, as thy mind impels, and start not away from thy purpose!"

Such were the words of the God. Right readily heard him Athène:
Eager she swoop'd to the earth, from the towering peaks of Olympus.

Meanwhile, Hector's flight was persistently track'd by Achilleus.
Just as a strong-limb'd hound, in pursuit of a fawn on the mountain
Roused from its evening lair, winds on thro' the glens and the thickets;
Though the prey 'scape for a while, in the thick copse crouch'd for concealment,
Still, on its track, does the hound unceasingly run, till he find it:
Thus, did Hector fail to escape from the speed of Achilleus.
Oft he essay'd to arrive, by a rush, at the gates of the Dardans;
Or at the base of the walls—where, he hoped, that the showering missiles,
Hurl'd by his friends from above, might suffice to repel his assailant;
But, upon each attempt, the pursuer's speed, intercepting,
Drove him away to the plain:—for nearer the town was Pelides.
As in a dream, one seems to be flying, one to be chasing[c],
Yet nor the one can escape, nor the other at all overtake him;
So, did his speed of feet, neither Hector avail, nor Achilleus.
What was the power, unseen, which Hector sustain'd, and enabled
Thus to postpone his Fate?—As his guardian, Phœbus Apollo

[c] The uneasy rhythm of this line is in accordance with the original; expressive of the idea.

Stood, in his closing scene, giving vigor, and speed for the last time.
And, by a move of his head, to his people the mighty Achilleus
Signal'd, to lower their spears, nor venture to aim them at Hector:
Lest any wound him, first; and himself come second in glory.
But when, in flight and chace, they, the fourth time, came to the fountains;
Then were the golden scales upraised by the Father: within them,
Placing the double fates—each heavy with doom and destruction—
One was the lot of Achilles, one Hector's—tamer of war-steeds,—
Then, by the middle, suspended; and Hector's scale was the down one:
Into the shades it sank:—then fled from him Phœbus Apollo.

Then, to Pelides' aid, came the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène;
Stood by the hero's side, and with wingèd words she address'd him.

"Now do I hope we two—great Zeus-loved hero, Achilleus!—
Cover'd with mighty renown, shall return to the ships of Achaia;
Hector's death achieved; though unsated he still is of battle.
It is in vain henceforth that by flight he attempts to escape us.
Vain, upon his behalf, are the prayers of the archer Apollo;
Suppliant, stretch'd as he is, at the feet of the Ægis-wielder.
Stand thou here by thyself, and recover thy breath;—and await me,
Leading him up to thy front, persuaded to peril the combat."

Such were Athène's words; and he joyfully heard and obey'd them:
Standing, he lean'd on the brass-barb'd ashen shaft of his jav'lin.
Him, did the Goddess leave; and, departing, she went unto Hector;
Bearing Deiphobus' form, and with voice attuned, to resemble
His. Near standing to Hector, in wingèd words she address'd him.

"Brother! thou'rt sore distress'd by pursuit of the rapid Achilleus;
Driven, by speed of foot, thus to circle the city of Priam.
But let us here make a stand, and together await, and repel him!"

Thus, then, spake in reply great Hector, glancing his bright crest.

" Dearest, by far, wert thou, O Deiphobus !—even of old time—
Dearest of all of my brothers, whom Hecuba bore unto Priam.
Now, yet closer than ever, my soul looks forward to hold thee ;
Venturing thus, for my sake—thine own eyes marking my danger—
Forth from the guarded wall ;—where the others are safely abiding."

Thus to the chief, in reply, spake the blue-eyed Goddess, Athène.

" Brother ! with lengthen'd prayers our father and mother entreated,
Urged me, with many embraces—and so did my chosen companions—
Yet to abide in the town—such a panic has fallen upon them :
But in my soul was a sorrow that would not be solaced without thee.
Now, with an eager resolve, let us rush to the battle—of jav'lins
Make not a stinted use :—let us see if the mighty Achilleus,
Slaying the twain, may strip our blood-stain'd trophies, and bear them
Off to the hollow ships—or himself sink, slain by thy war-spear."

With such words of guile was he led to his death by Athène.
So, when the two great foes stood opposite, close to each other,
First of the twain to break silence was Hector, glancing his bright crest.

" Peleus' son ! it is over.—I fear thee no more, as I once fear'd !—
Thrice, of Priam's town, have we circled the walls :—and I dared not
Stop to await thine arm ; but a strong resolution impels me,
Here to withstand thee, now :—and to slay, or be slain, in the combat.
But let us first invoke all the Gods upon high, and adjure them ;
Witnesses best as they are, and guardians, ever, of treaties :—
Should I attain success, should Zeus concede me the conquest,
Taking thy life—for thy corpse no vile affront shall attend it.
Only thy radiant arms do I strip from thy limbs, O Achilleus !
Yielding thy corpse to Achaia.—Now proffer me equal assurance[d] !"

[d] Under the circumstances, there was no sort of pretext for Hector's seeking to bind Achilles not to exercise the full rights—whatever they might properly be—of a victor. He had himself, according to the poet, proposed to inflict, and without any strong pro-

Then, with a low'ring look, spake the great swift-footed Achilleus.

"Talk not of compacts to me—thou wretch, of unpardon'd offences!
Lions and men come not into treaties or plighted engagements;
Wolves and lambs entertain no feeling of friendship between them;
All their thoughts are of deadly hostility, one to the other:
So, between me and thee, no terms can exist, and no treaties
Ever be pledged, till one or the other is down; and his blood flows,
Slaking the thirst of the God, of the terrible warrior Ares.—
Call up the whole of thy valor and strength to thine aid!—The occasion
Needs thy skill in arms, and thy prowess in fight as a soldier.
No more time for evasion!—This instant, Pallas Athène
Yields thy life to my spear;—thus affording, at last, an atonement
Meet for my comrades' deaths, laid low by thy furious weapon."

Speaking, he brandish'd and hurl'd his bright spear, casting a long shade.
Hector, marking the flight of the spear, disappointed its fury,
Stooping beneath its course; and the brass point, flying above him,
Stood, deep-rooted in earth:—then, seizing it, Pallas Athène
Gave it again to Achilles; unmark'd by the shepherd-of-people,
Hector; who joyful thus spake aloud to the mighty Achilleus.

"False was the aim!—Great Zeus never told to thee, godlike Achilleus!
All that thy tongue has said—the details of the fate that awaits me.
Somewhat flippant thou art, and crafty, methinks, in expression;
Deeming by sounding words to affrighten the courage within me.
Nor shall a wound in my back—as a fugitive—strike me: thy jav'lin,
Full in the midst of my breast, shall pierce me, in act to assail thee,
Should the renown be thine:—but before it, avoid, as thou best mayst,

voking cause—the worst indignities upon the corpse of Patroclus; viz., decapitation, impalement, and exposure of the body to dogs. Il. xviii. 176. He had himself twice fled from Achilles: and when now, in a spasm of resolution—although a noble one—he resolves to face him, the proposition that Achilles shall agree to any terms founded on an assumed equality between them—however reasonable such terms may in themselves at first sight appear—was evidently one which he could not expect to be entertained.

This spear-point—would heav'n ! it stood to the barbs in thy bosom ;
Lighter, and easier, then, for Troy were the toil of the battle,
Thou thus brought to destruction—her greatest and fiercest assailant !"

Speaking, he brandish'd and hurl'd his bright spear, casting a long shade.
Fairly Pelides' buckler it struck on the centre, nor miss'd it ;
But, far away from the shield, did the spear bound blunted—and Hector
Grieved for the useless stroke, and the lance sent in vain from his right-hand.
All-dejected he stood—no spear in reserve had he taken.
Then, he the silver-shielded Deiphobus call'd, and demanded
Loudly a second spear—no Deiphobus stood to assist him.
Hector then spake thus—for he inwardly saw the deception.

" And it is even so ! And my death is decreed by the great Gods !
Surely I deem'd that my brother Deiphobus stood to assist me ;
But he abides in the wall ;—I am sorely deceived by Athène !
Dark death comes on apace, its absence little protracted ;
No way now for escape ;—it once was a pleasure, of old time,
Both for Zeus himself, and his far-darting son, their protection
From all ills to afford—but Fate now surely approaches.
Yet will I even now not inglorious die, and quiescent :
But in a mighty attempt, which unborn generations may hear of."

Hector communed thus ; and baring the edge of his falchion—
Huge and massive blade, which hung at his side on the broad-belt—
Rush'd, with collected might—as an eagle, loftily soaring,
Swoops to the level plain from the murky masses of dark clouds,
Clutching a tender lamb, or a trembling hare, in his talons ;
Thus on his foe rush'd Hector, his sharp blade brandish'd before him.
Onward Achilleus swept—with the fury aroused in his great heart,
Fiercely :—to cover his bosom his broad shield glitter'd before him,
Brightly emblazon'd orb ;—and the fourfold crest of his helmet
Sway'd, as the warrior moved ; and, above it, the trembling plumage

Sparkled, in feathery gold—thick set by the hand of Hephæstus.
As amid fainter stars when the Evening Star, in the twilight
Glitters—a fairer star never shines on the face of the heavens—
Thus, of his burnish'd spear, did the sharp point glitter:—Achilleus
Brandish'd the dreadful lance in his strong right hand; meditating
Evil to godlike Hector; inspecting his frame, to discover
Easiest entrance-place; for his body was sheath'd in the bright arms
Won, when he slew and despoil'd in the battle the mighty Patroclus.
There—where the collar-bones fit into the neck, was a crevice,
Leaving the neck exposed—and the readiest way to destruction.
There, his levell'd spear, right eagerly darted Achilleus.
Cutting the tender neck, to the far side traversed the spear-point;
Nor did the ashen dart, sharp pointed in brass, to the wind-pipe
Pierce; nor the power of speech at the last take away; in the red-dust
Headlong he roll'd and fell—and thus gloried the mighty Achilleus.

"Hector! thine arrogant heart—while despoiling the corpse of Patroclus—
Deem'd all safe—and took no account of myself at a distance.
Fool! far stronger than thou, though away, yet a mighty avenger,
I, by the hollow ships, was abiding my time—I have met thee,
Stretching thy limbs in the dust:—and them shall the dogs and the vultures
Tear, in unseemly sort—he be buried by mourning Achaia."

Then, with expiring breath, spake Hector; glancing his bright crest.

"Now, by thy life, by thy knees, by thy parents dear—I beseech thee!
Leave not my corpse, at the ships, to be torn by the dogs of Achaia!
Take those stores of brass, and of gold—they will be in abundance—
Offered to thee by my father and mother dear, as my ransom.
Give but my corpse, in return, to be borne to my home:—that my people,
Trojans, and Trojan dames, may award to me funeral honors."

Then, with a low'ring look, spake the swift-footed hero, Achilleus.

" Plead not—hound as thou art—by my knees unto me, or by parents.
Such are the burning hate and the fury of soul that possess me,
I could myself that flesh, in revenge for thy deeds, make a meal on.
No man lives, whose persuasion can rescue thy head from the wild-dogs :
Not if he now stood here and proffer'd egregious ransom
Ten times, twenty times told—and then offer'd more to increase it :
Not if, in lieu of thy body, thy own weight, counted in bright gold,
Dardan Priam brought, not then should the mother who bore thee
Ever possess that corpse, to bewail it on funeral couches.
Rather, the hounds and birds shall feed on the whole, to their surfeit."

Then, with expiring breath, spake Hector, glancing his bright crest.

" I have expected this, for I knew thee of old ; and I thought not
Ever to change thy resolve :—for as steel is the heart in thy bosom.
Yet think this—it is *I*, in the wrath of the Gods, overtake thee,
On that day when the prowess of Paris and Phœbus Apollo
Stretches thee, brave as thou art, here lifeless, in front of the town's gates !"

Thus as he spake, came death, with its dark shade gloomily o'er him.
Flitted the naked soul, from the beautiful body, to Hades ;
Wailing its hapless fate, and the vigor and youth it abandon'd.

Then, on his dead foe's corpse thus Achilleus gazing, address'd it.

" Die thou first !—For myself, and my fate, I am ready to meet it,
When Zeus wills it to come, and the rest of the Gods, the Immortals."

Thus did the hero speak, and his sharp lance drew from the body :
Placing the weapon aside :—and then from the limbs of the slain-man
Stripp'd his blood-stain'd spoils :—fast gather'd the sons of Achaia ;
Glutting their eyes with the bulk and the fair-form'd stature of Hector ;
And, of the standers-round, each added a wound to the carcass :

Such were the words that pass'd, as each man spake to his fellows.

" Gods! He is softer now, and easier far to be dealt with,
Than when that right-hand scatter'd flame on the fleet of Achaia !"

Thus, would beholders speak, then stand by the body, and pierce it.
But when the dead was stripp'd by the swift-footed hero Achilleus,
Thus, 'mid the sons of Achaia, with wingèd words he address'd them.

" Friends ! great guiders in council, and leaders in fight, of the Argives !
Since thus the Gods, at last, have vouchsafed us the conquest of this man,—
One who has wrought us ills, more than all of the rest of his armies,—
Let us, in arms, approaching the walls of the town, reconnoitre,
Noting the men of Troy, and the spirit that seems to possess them :
Whether, their champion slain, they propose to abandon the bulwarks ;
Or, have a heart to remain ;—with Hector no longer among them.
But upon thoughts like these why lingers my soul ?—when my dear friend
Lies by the galleys' side, unwept, uninterr'd, though a dead corpse ;
Even Patroclus' self?—This bosom can never forget him
While yet I live with the living, and move with my knees to support me.
Though in the regions of Hades the dead do not recognise dead friends,
I, of my own dear friend, e'en *there* will retain the remembrance.
Now to the hollow ships let us hasten, ye youths of Achaia !
Bearing this conquer'd foe, and chanting Pæans before him.
Glory renown'd is ours—we have slaughter'd the valorous Hector ;
Once, in his native town, as a Deity held by the Trojans."

Thus as the hero spake, he maltreated the valorous Hector.
Boring the sinews behind, at the back of the feet through the tendons,
Right between ankle and heel ; and, straps of leather inserting,
Bound him in rear of the car—his head left dragging behind it.
Then he ascended the car, and, raising the arms as a trophy,
Lash'd his chargers to speed—and they eagerly bounded before him.
Thus, as his corpse was dragg'd, rose the dust in a cloud, and his dark hair

Stream'd from his head :—that head so graceful of yore, now extended
Prone on the earth; for Zeus had deliver'd him up to the foemen;
Thus, in his native land, to be foully misused and insulted.

So, was the whole of his head enveloped in dust,—and his mother
Rent her hair, and afar from her brows threw the beautiful head-dress;
Groaning and shrieking aloud, as she gazed on the fate of her offspring.
Groan'd, in piteous tones, his father besides; and the people
Fill'd Troy's streets with the sounds of deep lamentation and groaning.
Such was the deep consternation as if from her loftiest summit
Ilion, towering town, were enveloped in one conflagration.
Scarce did his people restrain their old king, bow'd with affliction,
Seeking to find his way thro' the gates to the camp of Achaia;
Praying to all that he met, and rolling himself in defilement;
Singling each man out, as he call'd him by name and address'd him.

"Do not detain me, friends! but permit me, alone in my sorrow,
Issuing forth from the town, to arrive at the ships of Achaia;
There to entreat this hero, this man of unparallel'd actions;
Fierce as he is, he perchance may be moved by my age, and may pity
These declining years :—he too has a father of like age;
Peleus, he who begat and rear'd him, alas! as a mischief
Unto the sons of Troy; and me, above all, has he stricken.
Many and brave are the sons of whom his arm has bereaved me.
Yet, though grieving for all, for them so much I lament not
As for the one, whose loss will sink me in sorrow to Hades,
Hector!—Would, that he had but died in my arms!—That his parents,
She, his mother who bore him—unfortunate birth!—and my ownself,
Over his corpse, our souls might have sated with weeping and wailing."

Thus spake the weeping monarch: his groaning people responded.
Hecuba then, 'mid the women of Troy, led the chorus of wailing.

"Why do I yet survive, in my heavy affliction, my dear son!

Thou having pass'd away?—Thou, ever regarded of old time,
Day and night, as the boast of thy native town: the protector
Fair, of the sons of Troy and her daughters, who, like an Immortal,
Welcomed thee home from the fight:—for with glory thou ever hast come back
When yet alive—now Death and dark Fate gather around thee!"

Thus did she speak, in her tears.—Not yet had the consort of Hector
Heard of events; no bearer of news too true, had inform'd her
How, by himself, her husband abided in front of the portals.
She, with her shuttle and loom, in a quiet recess of the palace,
Work'd at a purple robe, and embroider'd it richly in flowers.
And she was giving command to the handmaidens daintily-braided,
Bidding them place on the fire a tripod of size—that a warm bath
Might be at once prepared for Hector returning from battle.
Foolish woman! how little suspecting the truth, that her husband,
Far from baths, lay slain by Achilles and Pallas Athène:
When, of a sudden, she heard from the wall lamentation and wailing.
All her limbs grew faint; from her hand to the floor fell the shuttle:
And thus again she address'd her attendants, daintily-braided.

"Two of you follow behind me,—I go to collect what has happen'd.
It is the Queen's own voice that reaches my ear; and within me
All of my heart leaps up in dismay to my mouth; and a terror
Palsies my knees—a misfortune is nigh for the children of Priam.
Far from my ear be removed such a tale as I dread—but I fear much
Lest it be even thus,—that Hector by mighty Achilleus,
All by himself, intercepted from reaching the city, is chased off
Over the open plain; and his deeds in the battle be ended,
That which he always had;—for he never abode in the dense ranks,
But in the front of the van, not yielding to any in prowess."

Thus did she speak; and forth, as if frantic, out from the palace,
Rush'd, with a quaking heart; her attendants follow'd beside her.

But when she came to the tow'r where men stood cluster'd together,
Standing, she cast from the wall one timorous glance—and discern'd all—
Look'd on her husband dragg'd in the front of the town; and the chargers,
Bearing him ruthlessly off to the hollow ships of Achaia.
And at the sight came a mist and a dark cloud over her eyeballs;
Backward fainting she fell, and her soul sigh'd away, as she sank down.
Far from her graceful head flew the whole of its gleaming adornments;
Fillet, and binding net, and the coronet shining above them,
Veil too—all of them gifts of the golden Queen Aphrodite,
When from Eëtion's walls, great Hector, glancing his bright crest,
Carried his bride; and bestow'd on her father a plentiful dowry.
Gather'd her sisters-in-law, and her kinswomen all to attend her;
And they restored her to life, nor allow'd her to die in her sorrow.
Breath came again, and sensation revived in her bosom; and pouring,
Suddenly forth, deep groans, thus she spake to the wives of the Trojans.

"Hector! unhappy me!—We were born unto equal affliction,
Both of us!—Thou, in the walls of Troy, in the palace of Priam:
I, in the walls of Thebes, in the shade of the Placian woodlands,
Under Eëtion's roof—where he brought me up, e'en from an infant.
Hapless father and babe!—it were better, by far, she had breath'd not!
Now, unto Hades' realms, where earth has her gloomy recesses,
Move thy departing steps—thy wife left widow'd behind thee,
Mourning within thy palace—thy child yet a helpless infant;
Child of a hapless couple, of thee—of me; and thine own son,
Hector, dead as thou art, thee neither will help nor be help'd by.
E'en if he chance to escape this mournful war with Achaia,
Yet, since *thou* art gone, will cares and unceasing affliction
Ever be his!—Strange hands will seize on his father's possessions.
For, with his father, a boy loses also the friends of his boyhood.
Downcast eyes are his, and cheeks oft-wetted by tear-drops.
Famish'd with hunger and thirst, if the child seeks his father's companions,
Doubtfully twitching the garment of one, or the cloak of another,
If any gives him to drink in a feeling of pity, the goblet

Merely is held to his lips, and is moved ere it moistens his palate.
Then, some boy, who rejoices in both of his parents, assails him,
Driving him off from the banquet, with insult and blows;—thus exclaiming,
'Here!—take this, and be off!—No father of thine can be found here.'
Weeping he goes—it may be, my Astyanax! thou—in his trouble,
Unto his widow'd mother—accustom'd of yore to be seated
Safe on a father's knees, there fed upon marrow and fatness,
And when inclined for sleep, overwearied with childish enjoyments,
Slumber'd in peace on a pillow, or hush'd in the arms of its own nurse,
Used to a soft-strewn couch, and an appetite sated with dainties.
All otherwise will it be—my Astyanax—now, that thy father
Leaves his son—whom Troy thus named, in thy father's remembrance;
Who of her long-rang'd walls and gates was the only protector.
Now, by the beaks of the galleys, afar from thy parents, my husband!
Worms must finish the feast that is left when the dogs have deserted
Thine uncover'd body.—Thy garments which lie in the palace,
Woven by female hands, and of light and of beautiful textures,
These will I all collect, and to ashes consume in the bright blaze:
Useless in future to thee—as thou liest exposed—they may yet serve,
Thus, to remind of thy fame, Troy's sons, and the wives of the Trojans."

Weeping she spake, and the women responded in groanings around her.

BOOK THE TWENTY-THIRD.

Treats of the burial rites, and the funeral games, of Patroclus.

Such, was the general wailing that rose from the town.—The Achaians
Unto the hollow ships, and to Hellespont's shores had return'd back,
Widely dispersing apart, each away to the hold of his galley.
But, of the Myrmidon troops, the dispersion was stay'd by Achilleus,
Speaking aloud to the ranks of the warriors thronging around him.

"Myrmidons! famed for the speed of your steeds! my belovèd companions!
Let us at present delay from the cars to unharness the chargers,
Ere that, with steeds and cars, we have circled the corpse of Patroclus,
Weeping his death premature:—thus ever be honor'd the great dead!
When we have taken our fill of the sad consolation of sorrow,
Then be the steeds unharness'd, and meet we again for the banquet."

So, they bemoan'd their dead, as with one voice;—led by Achilleus.
Wailing, they three times drove, in procession, their fair-coated war-steeds,
Circling the body; and Thetis implanted a yearning for weeping.
Even the sand was besprinkled, their mail was bedimm'd by the tear-drops
Shed by desiring eyes, now deprived of so mighty a hero.
Peleus' son, at their head, led the deep diapason of sorrow;
Laying his hands—that so many had slain—on the breast of his slain friend.

"All hail!—Though far away, and in Hades' mansion—Patroclus!
Lo! I have now done all that I promised, erewhile, to accomplish;
Dragg'd hither Hector's corpse, to be cast as a meal to the wild-dogs;

And on thy funeral pile, of illustrious sons of the Trojans,
Twelve have I saved to be slaughter'd,—in scanty revenge for thine own fate."

Thus did the hero speak;—then Hector unworthily treated;
Hurling him, headlong, down, by the bier of the son of Menœtius,
There to remain in the dust.—Meanwhile, did his martial attendants
Loosen their shining arms, and their neighing chargers unharness.
Then, did they sit them down, by the ship of the mighty Pelides;
Thousands at once; and he gave them the treat of the funeral banquet.
Many a sleek-skinn'd steer was extended in death, on the keen steel
Spitted; and many a goat, and many a well-fatted wether,
Many a white-tusk'd boar, with the rich lard coated upon it,
Stretch'd at length, was embrown'd by the fiery blaze of Hephæstus.
Copious, everywhere, did the blood run in streams by the dead-man.

Meanwhile the prince of the feasters, the swift-footed leader Pelides,
Unto the great Agamemnon, was led by the kings of Achaia;
Scarcely persuaded to go; such his grief for the death of his comrade.
They, when at last they arrived at the tent of the King Agamemnon,
Spake to the clear-voiced heralds, and hastily gave them commandment,
Bidding them place on the fire a tripod of size;—if Pelides
Might be persuaded to wash, and remove the red tokens of carnage.
But he refused, resolutely; and added an oath to confirm it.

"Not so! Witness it, Zeus! who is highest and greatest of all Gods!
It cannot be, that my head shall again be refresh'd by ablutions,
Ere I Patroclus place on his funeral pile, and his tomb raise;
And there shear these locks.—For a grief, such as this that I now feel,
Never again can be mine, while I dwell in the land of the living.
Let us at present surrender ourselves to this sorrowful banquet.
And, with the morrow's dawn, great King of men, Agamemnon!
Order the wood to be brought; and, beside it, abundance of all things
Fitting a corpse to possess, when approaching the region of shadows.

So, the devouring flame may the sooner remove the departed,
Out of our sight—and the people again may resume their employments."

Thus did the hero speak,—they attentively heard, and obey'd him.
Zealously turn'd to the feast, and the banquet prepared, and when ready
Shared it among them all ; nor did any one lack entertainment.
So, when for food and for drink they had sated the appetite in them,
Each went away to his tent, and there sought slumber's refreshment.

But, by the margin of Ocean eternally-sounding, Pelides
Lay, still heavily groaning ; his Myrmidons lying around him,
Out, in an open space, where the waves ever broke on the shingle :
Slumber seized him at last, and forgetfulness, pouring around him,
Eased his distracted mind :—for a weariness stole on his strong limbs,
Tired with chasing Hector, by Ilion swept by the breezes.
There, as he slept, to his side came the spirit of fallen Patroclus ;
Perfectly like him in height, and in beauty of eye, and with accents
Such as were his in life ; and the raiment he wore was the same too.
Close by the head of the hero the spirit stood, and address'd him.

" Sleep'st thou ?—And am I, thus, so early forgotten, Achilleus ?
'Tis not the living friend, thou neglectest thus ; but the dead one !
Bury me, soon as may be ;—and I then pass the portals of Hades.
Now am I driven away by the spectres, the shades of the parted ;
Nor do they let me come over the stream, and associate with them.
So, am I wandering here, in the front of the portals of Hades.
Let me, then, once more hang on the touch of thy hand !—for I shall not
Ever return from below, when the funeral flames have consumed me.
Never again, as in life, far apart from beloved companions,
Can we be seated, and take sweet counsel together ; a sad Fate
Has overtaken thy friend,—from his birth has it all been predestined.
And it is thine own fate—like a God as thou art—O Achilleus !
Here, to be reft of life, 'neath the wall of the valorous Trojans.
Yet, have I one thing more, to request, if thou pleasest to grant it—

Lay not the bones of myself far away from thine own, my Achilleus!
Let us together rest, as together we lived, in thine own home;
When, as a stripling in age, I was brought by my father from Opus,
To thy paternal home—an unfortunate homicide caused it;
For I had recently slaughter'd Amphidamas' son, in my folly:
It was a deed undesign'd;—I was anger'd at dice, and I slew him.
Then was I entertain'd in his palace, by chivalrous Peleus;
Well did he nurture my youth, and he gave me to thee, as attendant.
Therefore, the bones of us both—let the same urn hold them, Achilleus!
Even the golden vase, that vase which thy mother presented."

Then, in reply to his friend, spake the swift-footed leader Achilleus.

"Why is it, dearest of men! thou art hither again, and enjoinest
Matters minute as these?—Whatsoever it be thou requestest,
All do I willingly grant; and will earnestly care to perform it.
But come—step more near!—for an instant, again, in embraces,
Let us unite; and indulge in the sad consolation of sorrow!"

Thus did he speak to the shade;—and his arms spread out, to embrace it:
But in his grasp was nought—for the spirit, below, like a vapor,
Sank, with a wailing cry.—Up started, in terror, Achilleus;
Smote his extended hands, and he utter'd a cry of complaining.

"Then, it is even so!—There abide, in the mansions of Hades,
Spirits, and forms of the dead;—but the substance, alas! it remains not.
All through the dreary night, has the shade of unhappy Patroclus,
Stood at my side—poor spectre—lamenting its fate, and bewailing:
Giving me many injunctions—the semblance of that which he once was[a]."

[a] Pope's translation—very well known and very beautiful as it is—of this speech of Achilles, beginning—

"'Tis true, 'tis certain; man, though dead, retains
Part of himself; th' immortal mind remains,"

is not in accordance with the leading idea of the original. Achilles is not represented by Homer as convinced or frightened by the apparition of Patroclus into a recantation of

Then, at his words, yet again upon all came the yearning of sorrow.
Nor had the wailing subsided when Morn, with her fingers of roses,
Found them around their dead.—Full soon did the King Agamemnon
Send from the tents stout mules, with woodcutters marching beside them,
Forth, to collect firewood;—and a leader, renown'd, to conduct them;
Merion, charioteer of the kind-hearted prince of the Cretans.
Axes, for felling the timber, they held in their hands, as they march'd on:
Chains, well-link'd, for the binding:—the mules went onward before them;
Scrambling and rambling, up and down, side to side, climbing the pathways:
When they arrived at the ranges of Ida, streaming with fountains,
Soon on the high-leaved oaks came the broadset edge of the axes,
Wielded by stalwart arms:—and, mightily crashing, the great trees
Fell.—Then splitting them up, into billets, the sons of Achaia,
Laid them on backs of mules; and down through the depths of the thickets,
Plodded their measured steps, as they gladly return'd to the lowlands.
Each of the woodcutters, too, bare a fagot—for thus had commanded
Merion, charioteer of the kind-hearted prince of the Cretans.
Then they deposited all of their loads on the beach, where Achilleus
Plann'd, for Patroclus, a tomb; to be also a tomb for his own self.
There they together cast their burdens on earth:—and the bearers,
Seated in throngs on the ground, there abided to rest:—but Achilleus
Issued command, at once, to his Myrmidons, lovers of battle,
Bidding them gird on their armor, and each of them harness his warsteeds,
Unto his car.—They arose, and were speedily girded in armor;
Charioteers at their side, came the warriors, high on the war-cars,
Driving the steeds in the van:—in the rear came the cloud of the spearmen,
Numberless—and, in the midst, his companions carried Patroclus;

a previous scepticism as to the continued existence of the soul after death; his frequent addresses to Patroclus show that he entertained no doubt as to his friend's remaining in a state of sentient existence; but the surprise which he expresses is at being convinced of the wholly *immaterial* nature of that existence.

Strewing the whole of the corpse with the sever'd locks, which they shear'd off
Unto the dead:—and supporting his head came the mighty Achilleus,
Sore at heart, at the loss of the friend he was sending to Hades.

When they arrived at the spot which was pointed them out by Achilleus,
There, did they set him down, and arrange a big pile to appease him.
And, with a sudden thought, did the swift-footed leader Achilleus,
Standing apart from the pile, from his head clip asunder the tresses,
Vow'd, in luxurious growth, to be shorn to the River Spercheius.
Sorely distress'd at his heart, thus he spake, as he look'd on the dark sea.

"Vainly, Spercheius! to thee was the vow of the chivalrous Peleus;
That, on my happy return back again to the land of my fathers,
Then, would I shear these locks, and a hecatomb slay in thine honor;
Such as is vow'd to the Gods; five times ten rams at thy fountains,
And at thy shrine and grove, and thine altar, breathing of incense.
Such was the old man's vow—but the wish of his heart thou'st wrought not.
Now, as I never again may return to the land of my fathers,
Let me bestow these locks, to do honor to mighty Patroclus!"

Speaking, he shore them away, and the locks in the hands of his dead friend
Placed:—on the hearts of all then, again, came the yearning of sorrow.
Now had the sun gone down ere the lamentation was ended;
Had not Achilleus sought Agamemnon's side, and address'd him.

"Atreus' son!—for whatever is utter'd by thee, the Achaians
Hear, with profoundest heed—there may e'en be a surfeit of wailing.
Send, from the funeral pile, to the navy the host; and disperse them
Unto the evening meal. We, alone, whom the duty concerns most,
Here will attend to the dead:—but the leaders, with us, may abide here."

So, when the hero's words had been heard by the King Agamemnon,
All of Achaia's host he dispersed back again to the galleys.
Only the mourners stay'd, and began rearranging the firewood;
Building a funeral pile, of a hundred feet upon each side.
And, on the top of the pile, they the dead man mournfully laid out.
Then, fat sheep in abundance, and wide-footed curly-horn'd oxen,
Full in the front of the pile, were slaughter'd and flay'd;—and from all these,
Taking away their fat, did Achilleus, over Patroclus,
Lay it, from head to the feet:—then the carcases ranged up around him,
Vases of unguent and honey he placed on the pile; and inclined them,
Tilting the mouths to the couch where the dead man lay;—then of war-steeds
Four—with their lofty necks—did he groaningly add to the victims.
Nine great dogs were accustom'd to wait at the board of the monarch:
Two among these did he slaughter, and cast on the pile, to be burnt there.
Lastly, the twelve brave sons of magnanimous chiefs of the Trojans,
Died by the hero's blade—dark deeds was his spirit resolved on.
Such, for the steel-like strength of the flames, was the food he provided.
Then did he utter a groan; and he call'd on the shade of his comrade.

"All hail! Though far away, and in Hades' mansion, Patroclus!
All have I offer'd, now, that I recently promised to give thee.
Twelve brave warriors, sons of magnanimous chiefs of the Trojans,
Will, as thyself, yield food to the funeral flames.—As for Hector—
Priam's son—I reserve him as food, not for flames, but for wild-dogs."

Such were his threat'ning words:—but the dogs never meddled with Hector.
All of the dogs were affray'd by the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite,
Day and night;—and the corpse she anointed with unguent of roses,
Of an ambrosial kind:—that he might not be injured or mangled.
And, of an azure hue, from the sky to the earth, did Apollo
Spread a descending cloud, as a shelter and screen to the whole place
Where lay extended the corpse; and the sun's heat also avail'd not

Either the members to scorch, or the flesh, and the withering sinews.

Uncaught, yet, by the fire, was the funeral pile of Patroclus.
Then, did a further thought, strike the swift-footed leader Achilleus.
Standing apart from the pile, he a prayer offer'd up to the two Winds,
Boreas, Zephyrus swift; and he promised them beautiful victims;
And from a golden bowl pouring ample libations, entreated
Both to arrive; that the wood might burst into blaze, and the fierce flame,
Quickly the body consume of his friend.—Then the swift-wing'd Iris,
Hearing the hero's prayer, to the Winds went forth to convey it.
All of the Winds were collected in blustering Zephyrus' palace,
Meeting together in banquet: as Iris saw them, she enter'd,
Treading the threshold of stone:—and the Winds, beholding the Goddess,
All rush'd up; and each on his own seat pray'd her to sit down:
But she refused to repose; and spake to them thus, and address'd them.

"I cannot sit—I am hence back again to the stream of the Ocean,
Unto the Æthiops' land, where hecatombs ever are offer'd,
To the immortal Gods; and I go for my share of the off'rings.
But unto Boreas strong, and to Zephyrus loud, does Achilleus
Offer his prayer for aid; and he promises beautiful victims,
If ye arise and fire the funeral pile, where Patroclus
Lies; it is he over whom are arising the groans of Achaia."

Thus, did the Goddess speak; and she went on her way:—and the Winds sprang
Up, with astounding clamor—the dark clouds driving before them,
Sweeping along, full soon they arrived at the sea; and the billows
Heaved up under their course;—and arriving at last at the Troad
Fell, on the funeral pile—loud rose up the roar of the fierce flames.
All night long did the blasts, shrill-whistling, hurry before them,
Hither and thither, the flames.—All night did the mighty Achilleus,
Forth from a golden bowl, with a goblet, hollow at both ends,
Baling the wine, ever pour it in dust, and moisten the dark earth;

Ever, by name, invoking the spirit of fallen Patroclus.
E'en as a father mourns while burning the bones of his own son,
Newly wedded, and then death-torn from disconsolate parents,
So, did Achilleus mourn while burning the bones of his dear friend;
Pacing by side of the pile, with deep lamentation and groaning.
For such time as on Earth light stream'd from the Star of the Morning,
Following whom, on the sea rises Dawn with her mantle of saffron,
So long a time did the fire sink smouldering down, and the flames fell.
Then, did the Winds back again to their own home go, to abide there,
Crossing the Thracian sea;—rough rose, as they swept it, the billows.
Then, on the farthest side of the pile, by himself, did Pelides,
Wearied, sink to the earth; then soft sleep stole on his senses.
When round Atreus' son came the chiefs in a throng to attend him;
And, as they came, their tread, and the clash of their armor, aroused him;
Upright he sat at once; and he spake to the chiefs and address'd them.

"Atreus' son! and ye other high chieftains of banded Achaia!
First, with the dark red wine let us sprinkle the pile, and extinguish
That which may yet survive of the force of the flame. This accomplish'd,
Let us collect the remains of Patroclus, son of Menœtius;
Carefully choosing his bones;—not hard is, in sooth, the selection:
They, in the central space of the pile, lie apart; and the others,
All on the edge of the fire;—men's intermingled with war-steeds'.
Placed in a golden urn, with a twofold caul to retain them,
Let his remains wait mine, till the day of my journey to Hades.
Nor, for the tomb, at present bestow much trouble to raise it;
Raise but a moderate mound.—Some day may ye, sons of Achaia!
Heap it up high and wide—on the day when I pass from among you—
Those in the well-oar'd galleys who then may remain as survivors."

Thus did the hero speak:—they obey'd the swift-footed Pelides.
First, with the dark red wine, did they sprinkle the pile, and extinguish
All that remain'd of the fire; the ashes thickly subsided.

Weeping, they then collected the fire-blanch'd bones of their kind friend;
Wrapp'd in a double caul, in a golden urn they arranged them;
Carried the urn to the tent, and cover'd it over with linen.
Then, did they trace out a tumulus, spreading afar the foundations
Round where the pile had been; and they heap'd up the soil in abundance.
And, when the mound was made, they were leaving the spot:—but Achilleus
Let not the people depart; but he bade them be seated, and wait for
Great funereal games.—Fair prizes were brought from his galleys;
Caldrons, tripods, and steeds, mules, oxen that carried their heads well;
Damsels, with delicate waists; and the dark-gray face of the bright steel.

Brave gifts first he proposed as the prizes for drivers of war-cars.
For first prize was a damsel of beautiful form, and accomplish'd;
Also a tripod vast, which two-and-twenty of measures
Easily held when full: and a mare was the prize for the second,
Six years old, in foal with a mule, and unbroken in spirit.
Prize for the third in the race was a caldron, fair and capacious,
Holding four good measures; untouch'd by the flame; it was white yet.
Two bright talents of gold then he placed in the midst, as the fourth prize:
Fifth and last, was a goblet, untouch'd by the flame, double-volumed.
Standing erect in his place, thus the hero spake to the Argives.

"Atreus' son! and the rest of the well-mail'd sons of Achaia!
Yonder, exposed unto view, are the prizes for drivers of war-steeds.
If, on some other account, were contending the sons of Achaia,
Then, would the first prize go to the tent of myself, as the victor—
For, ye are all well aware that unmatch'd is the might of my coursers;
Steeds of immortal race; they were given of yore by Poseidon
Unto my father; and I, as a present received them from Peleus.
But I abide desolate, both myself and my firm-footed chargers.
Such was the valor and might of the driver whose loss they are weeping;
Such was his kindness too.—How often with oil he anointed—
Bathing them, first, with water—the glistening manes of my war-steeds.

Therefore they stand, all despondent, with grief at his loss; and their manes hang
Down in the dust; and the pair stand motionless, sorely afflicted.
Ye! then, the rest stand forth; whosoe'er, of the sons of Achaia,
Boast of the fleetest steeds, and of chariots firmly compacted."

Thus did Pelides speak; quick rose up the drivers of war-steeds.
First, by a space well mark'd, was the king of men, Eumèlus;
Issue beloved of Admetus, and famed for his skill as a driver.
Second, was Tydeus' son, the redoubtable chief, Diomèdes;
Driving in harness together the chargers of Tros, which he captured
Late, from the Dardan prince; who his own life owed to Apollo.
Next, was the high-born chieftain, the auburn-hair'd Menelàus,
Atreus' son, with a swift pair coupled in harness before him;
Æthe, his brother's mare, and his own good charger Podargus.
Æthe was sent as a gift by Anchises'[b] son, Echepolus,
Unto the King Agamemnon;—a fine for his owner's remaining,
Taking his ease, nor attending Atrides to Troy; for abundant
Wealth he enjoy'd from Zeus,—so he tarried in Sicyon's broad fields.
Such was the mare that he drove; in the race-course keen and persistent.
Next did Antilochus harness his smooth-coated steeds for the contest[c];
Issue renown'd of Nestor,—magnanimous monarch;—of Neleus
He was the powerful son; and of Pylian race were the war-steeds
Harness'd in front of the car:—and, near to them standing, the elder
Gave good counsel, thus, to a son well apt to receive it.

"Young as thou art in years, yet Zeus and the mighty Poseidon
Both have loved thee well, and have made thee, Antilochus! expert

[b] Of course not the same as the father of Æneas; but an Argive.

[c] It is singular that Antilochus is represented as driving these horses (which are spoken of somewhat disrespectfully by Diomedes in the 8th Il., and also here by Nestor himself), instead of those of Asius; which are the only Trojan horses specially noticed in the Catalogue, and which had been captured by Antilochus in the battle within the entrenchments: Il. xiii, v. 400. Probably it may be intended to evidence his filial respect for his father.

In all matters of driving;—thou needest but little instruction.
Thou, by thyself, know'st how to encircle the goal:—but thy horses,
Slowest in speed as they are, suggest to my fears a disaster.
Others have steeds in truth that are better than thine, but in knowledge
Equal at least art thou to the best among all thine opponents.
Therefore do thou, dear son! use all of thy skill and contrivance;
Lest from thyself far away slip unexpected the prizes.
Not upon strength, but on skill, is the woodcutter chiefly reliant;
It is by skill that the pilot, through heaving waves of the dark sea,
Guides his vessel aright when driven by force of the tempest;
It is by skill in a race that driver vanquishes driver.
One, who on build of his car, and the speed of his chargers reliant,
Taking a winding course drives foolishly hither and thither,
Letting his steeds thus wander, is sure, in the end, to be nowhere.
While the more skilful driver, though driving inferior horses,
Aye has his eye on the goal, and he makes a sharp turn, and neglects not
Just at the proper moment to tighten the reins, and proceeding
Carefully, safely, along, keeps watch on the driver before him.
As for the goal of to-day, it is easily mark'd, and can scarce be
Miss'd; 'tis an old dry stump, of a cubit or so from the surface,
Oak, or larch perchance; and as yet undecay'd by the weather.
By it, on either side, two fragments of stone, of a white hue,
Stand in the turn of the road, but the course lies level around it.
It was the tomb, perchance, of one long dead and departed;
Or it, of yore, was placed by the men of a past generation,
There, to define some course; as to-day it is used by Achilleus.
Drive, with thy car and steeds, so near to, as all but to graze it;
Leaning thy body—thus—in the well-built frame of the chariot
O'er, to the left-hand side; and the right-hand courser encourage
Both with the voice and scourge, and slacken the reins on the right-hand;
Letting the left-hand courser the goal just clear as he rounds it,
So that the nave of the wheel may appear to approach in its circuit
Close to the stone of the goal.—Take heed not really to touch it!
Lest, with a broken car, and with coursers maim'd and disabled,

Shame may result to thyself, exultation to all of thy rivals.
Therefore, my son ! take heed, and be wary and keen at the same time !
If at the turning-point thou'rt ahead of the field, I affirm it,
That not a man can be found who then will be able to pass thee :
Not if he drove in pursuit with the heaven-bred charger Arion,
Swift-footed steed of Adrastus—whose race is derived from the great Gods—
Or the renownèd steeds of Laomedon[d]—best on the race-course."

Thus having spoken, again, in his own place, Nelean Nestor
Sat, once more, having given his son full charge and direction.
Fifth, and last, for the course did Meriones harness his fair steeds.

Then they ascended the cars, having cast their lots in a helmet ;
Which when Achilleus shook, of Antilochus, offspring of Nestor,
First, did the lot leap forth ; then the lot of the royal Eumèlus ;
Next was the lot of Atrides, the spear-famed chief Menelàus ;
Fourth was the place of Meriones ; last of them all was Tydides,
Bravest, by far, of the five, yet he won the worst place for his chargers.
All in a line were ranged. Then the course was defined by Achilleus,
Far on the open plain ;—and he sent, in advance, to the look-out,
Phœnix, godlike chief ; his father's aged attendant :
Sent, to report on the race, and to make a reliable statement.

All then, at once, uplifted their whips in their hands, and the lashes
Brought down, smart on the steeds, and excited, with loud exclamations,
All their strength :—and the steeds flew rapidly over the wide plain
Far from the galleys' sides :—and the dust rising up from their broad breasts
Stood, in the quiet air, like a cloud, or a gathering tempest ;
Wildly their manes stream'd out, in the draught of the wind of their own speed :
As for the cars, they now seem'd sinking below in the soft earth,

[d] Those driven by Diomed.

Now to be mounting on high, and to glide in the air: and the drivers
Stood, unmoved, in the cars; though each man's bosom was beating
High with the hope of success; and each exhorted his coursers,
As, in a cloud of dust, as if flying, they traversed the wide plain.
But when the farthest point of the course was attained by the coursers,
And they return'd once more to the dark-gray sea, then the merits
Might be of each discern'd, all strain'd to their speed.—In the front place
Flew the unrivall'd mares that were bearing the son of Pherètes:
Next unto these in the course, with the stallions of Tros, Diomèdes
Rush'd—not far in the rear—but following close on their rivals:
So that they even seem'd to be climbing the car of Eumèlus;
Even the midst of his back, and the broad expanse of his shoulders
Warm'd underneath their breath; for their heads flew pressing upon him.
Then they the race had won, or had left it an even encounter,
But unto Tydeus' son, in malevolence, Phœbus Apollo
Came, and the glittering scourge struck down, far away from his right hand.
Tears of indignant wrath overflooded his eyes, as he look'd on,
Faster and faster, the mares of his rival, gaining upon him,
While his own horses fail'd, from the want of a scourge to excite them.
Nor was the act of Apollo unminded by Pallas Athène;
How he had foil'd Diomedes. Pursuing the shepherd-of-people,
Quickly, the scourge she restored, and breath'd fresh strength in his coursers.
Then, in her wrath overtaking the hapless son of Admètus,
Snapp'd, with a touch, right asunder, the yoke of his car; and the pole fell,
Unsupported, to earth; and the steeds flew this way and that way.
And from the car, by the wheel, was the driver thrown; and his elbows,
Mouth, and nostrils alike, were broken and cut; and his forehead,
Even between his brows, was bruised with the fall; and the hot tears
Fill'd his swimming eyes; and his strong voice choked with emotion.
Tydeus' son, meanwhile, rush'd past, with his thundering chargers,
Far in advance of the field:—for his horses, Pallas Athène,
Strengthen'd anew for the course, and glory conferr'd on the driver.

Next came the car of Atrides, the auburn-hair'd Menelàus.
Then, to his father's steeds, thus shouted the issue of Nestor.

"On, with ye both!—Press on, at the top of your speed!—Though I do not
Ask, or expect it of you to compete in the race with the chargers
Now in the front—those steeds which Tydides drives—for Athène
Strengthens their speed for the course, and glory confers on the driver;—
Yet overtake those coursers of Atreus' son! nor be left here
All in the rear! nor submit to be beaten in speed by a female;—
Æthè—mare as she is.—Why lagging behind her, my bravest?—
Let me but warn you of this,—what I say will be surely accomplish'd—
No more care at the hands of Nestor, shepherd-of-people,
Ever is yours—but death, full soon at the point of the sharp steel—
If, by your want of spirit, we carry away but a low prize.
Therefore be swift in pursuit, press on in the race, to the utmost!
I will a means contrive, ay, plan with my utmost endeavors,
That when the path grows narrow, a way may be found to get by him."

Thus did he speak; and the chargers, in fear at the words of their master,
Ran, with redoubled speed, for a short time longer—the narrow
Part of the hollow pass soon came into sight of their driver.
It was a breaking away of the soil of the road, where the winter's
Rain had fissured the ground, and deepen'd the place to a gully.
Thither Atrides drove, thus avoiding the shock of his rivals.
After him Nestor's issue his own swift chargers directed
Out of the beaten track, and drove down edging upon him.
Then was Atrides afraid, and Antilochus loudly address'd thus.

"Hold up thy horses in hand—nor drive on, thus, like a madman!
Too narrow here is the way:—but it speedily widens; and there pass
On, if thou canst; but here to attempt it were hazard to both cars."

Thus did Atrides speak; but Antilochus so much the wilder

Lash'd on the flying steeds, and feign'd that he never had heard him.
Far in advance as the cast of a discus, over his shoulder
Thrown by a stalwart youth in a trial of strength, did his coursers
Pass by the steeds of Atrides; and they fell back to the rearward.
Atreus' son, himself, for the moment refraining to urge them,
Lest in the narrow defile their steeds should jostle together;
Turning the well-built cars right over; and casting the drivers
Down in the dust;—as the end of too eager a striving for conquest.
Then, in reproachful words, spake the auburn-hair'd Menelàus.

"Not among men can be found a more mischievous fellow than thou art!
Drive away!—but by mistake deem'd wise by the sons of Achaia!—
Yet, if the prize thou gain, it shall cost thee an oath to retain it."

Thus having spoken he shouted aloud, and encouraged his own steeds.
"Do not relax in your speed, nor desist from the strife in vexation!
Sooner the legs and knees of your rivals may fail, than your own will:
Wanting, as theirs now are, in the vigor of youth, that ye boast of."

Thus did Atrides speak: and his steeds flew speedily forwards,
Fearing their prince's reproaches; and rapidly gain'd on their rivals.

Meanwhile, seated at ease in rows in the ring, did the Argives
Watch, 'mid the cloud of dust, for the flying forms of the chargers.
First to distinguish the steeds was Idomeneus, prince of the Cretans;
For he was clear of the ring, and was seated aloft, to advantage.
Yet at a distance he heard and distinguish'd the shouts of the driver
Then in the front of the field,—and he recognised also the fair steed,
Rushing along; bright bay in the rest of his coat, but his forehead
Starr'd with a silver mark; all circular; like to the full-moon.
Straightway the monarch rose; and he spake to the rest of the Argives.

"Friends! who the Argives lead into battle, and guide in the council!
Do mine, alone, distinguish, or your eyes also, the chariots?

Steeds, not the same as at first, seem now to my sight to be foremost:
Nor is the driver the same who is gleaming in front.—His opponent's
Steeds, have perchance miscarried; though hitherto first in the race-course.
Well did I mark them, at starting, till nearing the goal; and from that time
I am unable to trace them: though straining my eyes upon all sides
Over the plain of Troy, my sight yet fails to discern them.
Is it the charioteer has been losing his reins, and has held not
In, as he rounded the goal, and has fail'd in his effort to turn it?
If it be so, I suspect, he has met with a fall; with his car smash'd,
Mares, too, wandering loose; so fierce is the spirit within them.
Therefore, do ye yourselves stand up, and discern!—for I cannot
Clearly myself make it out.—Yet I think I am sure of the victor:
One of Ætolian race, and a ruler and prince of the Argives:
Tydeus' valorous son; the redoubtable chief Diomèdes."

Then, with insulting words, spake the rapid Oïlean Ajax.

"Why prattle so prematurely, Idomeneus! thus?—For the same mares,
High-stepping over the plain, still keep in the front of their rivals.
Scarcely the youngest in age art thou 'mid the chiefs of the Argives;
Nor can the eyes in thy head be consider'd the best, or the sharpest:
Yet is thy tongue ever ready to babble and prate.—Such pretentious
Prating becomes not a man whose betters are sitting beside him.
Just the same steeds in the front are now to be seen as at first were:
Those of Eumèlus.—The reins yet are handled by him in the first car."

Sorely incensed at this, spake in answer the prince of the Cretans.

"Ajax! ready to wrangle, of evil device, but deficient
In whatsoever is good—for thy temper is rude and ungracious;
Let us a tripod bright, or a caldron stake on the issue—
And as an umpire, choose great Atreus' son, Agamemnon;—

Whose are the foremost steeds:—they will dwell in thy mind with the lost stake."

Thus did he speak: then fiercely uprose the Oïlean Ajax,
Wroth at heart, to retort in words of bitter reviling.
And there was like to have risen a heavy contention between them;
Had not Achilleus risen; and spoken to both, and address'd them.

"Answer, no more, thus the one to the other, in angry revilings,
Ajax! Thou too Idomeneus! Quarrels like this are unseemly.
Much, if another so err'd, would ye both be indignant against him.
Sit in the ring at peace; there watch for the chargers' arrival.
Soon will the steeds, all-strain'd as they are in the ardor of contest,
Make their appearance here: then each man may tell, if he spoke right,
Naming the steeds that are second, and those that are holding the first place."

E'en as the hero spake, drove near and yet nearer Tydides,
Constantly laying the lash on the backs of his steeds; and the horses
Bounded gallantly over the wide plain flying beneath them,
Ever the patches of dust, from their hoofs dash'd, fell on the driver;
And on the coursers' heels as they rapidly flew was the chariot
Whirling closely behind, emblazon'd with gold and with bright tin:
And of the chariot wheels in the light dust lying behind them
Scarcely a track remain'd—so rapid the flight of the horses.
Full in the midst of the ring did the victor draw up: and profusely
Down from the crests of his steeds and their broad chests trickled the sweat-drops.
He, from the glittering car, descended to earth with a light bound;
Leaning his well-used whip upright by the yoke: neither fail'd him,
Sthenelus, valorous chief; but he eagerly claiming the first prize
Gave it to trusty attendants, to bear to the galleys; the maiden;
Also the tripod fair: and then he unharness'd the horses.

Next came, driving his coursers, Antilochus, offspring of Neleus :
Who, not by speed, but contrivance, had pass'd in the race Menelàus.
Yet was he follow'd behind, full close, by the steeds of Atrides.
For such a space, from the wheel, as a horse is removed, when at full stretch
Whirling its master's car, at the height of its speed, o'er the smooth plain ;
And, as it runs, with the hair of its tail, far streaming behind it,
Brushes the tire of the wheel, and small is the interval parting
Horse and car, though soon is the wide plain traversed before them ;
By such a space, in the rear of Antilochus, came in Atrides ;
Recently left, as he had been, a full quoit's throw in the rearward,
He had regain'd his ground : so well had the efforts avail'd him
Of Agamemnon's mare, of the beautiful-coated Æthe :
And, had a longer course been allow'd for the race, she her rivals
Surely again had pass'd, and had won, beyond doubt or contention.
Merion, next in order, Idomeneus' gallant attendant,
Came, in Atrides' rear, at the distance behind of a spear-cast.
For, among all in the field, his fair-coated steeds were the slowest ;
And he himself knew least of the driving of cars on a race-course.
Last of the field, came in the unfortunate son of Admètus ;
Dragging his beautiful car[e], and driving before him his horses.
Him, with compassion, regarded the swift-footed leader Achilleus ;
Standing forth, he addressed with wingèd accents the Argives.

" Here is the best of the field, who is coming in last with his coursers !
Then, let the second prize be awarded to him ; as is justice.
As for the foremost prize, let it rest, as it lies, with Tydides."

Thus, did the hero speak ; and the Argives shouted approval.
Then had he given the mare—with the common assent of Achaia—
Had not Antilochus, son of a high-minded father—of Nestor—
Boldly his claim advanced ; to account thus calling Achilleus.

[e] The cars, it must be remembered, were so light as to be easily dragged ; or even lifted. See Il. x. v. 505.

"I shall be greatly displeased[f] if thou really performest, Achilleus!
That which thy words import; of my prize proposing to strip me;
Out of regard for misfortune befalling the car and the horses,
Of a redoubtable chieftain.—He ought to have sought the Immortals
More in prayer: not then in the field had his place been the hindmost.
But if thy mind his misfortune compassionates so, and regards him,
There is, away in thy tent, great treasure of gold, and of bright brass;
Sheep are there, and slaves, and abundance of strong-footed war-steeds.
Choose from these, for Eumèlus, a prize more rich, when the games cease;
Or even now;—thy praise will be told by the sons of Achaia.
But this mare, that is mine, I resign not. Whoso attempts it,
He—whosoever he be—must encounter myself, ere he holds her."

Such were the words of the youth; and Achilleus smiled, as he heard them;
Gracious, to all that he said: for the youth was a favor'd companion:
And, with wingèd words, thus spake in reply, and address'd him.

"Since I have thy commands to bestow from my stores, on Eumèlus,
Some other present, Antilochus! needs must I seek to obey them.
His shall the breastplate be, by myself won from Asteropæus;
Solid brass; with an edging of bright tin running around it,
All-resplendent:—in truth, he will find it a present of value."

Thus did he speak; and commanded Automedon, trusty companion,
Forth from the tent to carry the armor renown'd; and he brought it,
And to Eumèlus gave; and he took it, with ample contentment.

Then Menelaus rose, with his breast disturb'd, to address them;
Dreadfully sore at heart with the offspring of Nestor:—a herald
Placed in his hands his sceptre; and then commanded to silence,
All of the Argive host: and the godlike man thus address'd them.

[f] There is something exceedingly characteristic and quaint in these speeches of Antilochus and Achilles.

"Prudent as once thou wert, Antilochus! what hast thou done now?
Turning my glory to shame; and unworthily treating my horses:
Thrusting thine own in the front, though inferior greatly in swiftness.
But, of the Argive host, ye! the leaders and elders! determine
What are the rights of us both, and impartially give a decision:
Lest any man should affirm, of Achaians gleaming in armor,
'Nestor's son has been cheated, and falsely cajoled: Menelàus
Carried the mare as his prize; but he had her, because he was stronger,
Both in his force and might:—his, by far, the inferior horses.'
Or I myself propose this means of decision: and no man
Can, I assert, condemn it; for fair is the course of proceeding.
Come hither, noble chieftain, Antilochus!—as it befits thee!—
Stand in the front of thy car, at thy horses' heads; and the bright scourge
Hold in thy hand—that scourge thou'st used in the contest—and with it
Touch thou thy horses, and swear by the Earth-girder, great Enosicthon,
Thou'st impeded my car by no wilful design or contrivance."

Prudently, then, to the king spake Nestor's issue, in answer.

"No more! King Menelaus! Consider, how much is mine own age
Short of thine! how much thou art greater and braver than I am.
Well thou know'st the young are disposed to be eager, and forward:
Quick to perceive and suggest, but of mind deficient in judgment.
So, be thine heart appeased; and the mare will I readily yield thee;
That which I just have won: and would willingly give thee a present
Greater than this, of my own, if it be that thou willest to take it;
Rather than, Zeus-born prince! the misfortune were mine, to be fallen
Always from thine esteem; and a sinner be held by the great Gods."

Thus having spoken, the mare did the son of magnanimous Nestor,
Lead to thy side, Menelaus! and yield to thy hands. And the action
Gladden'd thy heart; as the dew soft-falling gladdens the wheat-crop,
Rendering pliant the ears that were bristling over the corn-fields;

So, in the breast of Atrides, the heart was soften'd and gladden'd :
While, with wingèd words, thus he spake to the youth, and address'd him.

"Sorely incensed as I was, I, Antilochus ! gladly forgive thee ;
And will myself concede : for thou, heretofore, never wast reckon'd
Rash, or flighty of mind. It is youth that has conquer'd thy judgment.
Henceforth, seek not again by contrivance to master thy betters !
Nor had I speedily, thus, been appeased by another Achaian[g] :
But, thou thyself hast endured much labor, and manifold hardships ;
Thou, and thy father too, and thy brother : and borne them in my cause.
Therefore, I yield to thy prayer ; moreover, the mare will I give thee ;
Mine, as she really is—that all the beholders may know me,
Such as I am—of a mind that was never severe or exacting."

Thus did the monarch speak, and relinquish'd the mare to Noemon,
Comrade and friend of Antilochus ;—taking, himself, but the caldron.
Two bright talents of gold were Meriones' prize ; for he came in
Fourth of the field. Of the prizes the fifth thus remain'd unawarded,
Even the double bowl ; this Achilleus gave unto Nestor,
Bearing it over the ring : and he spake thus, standing beside him.

"Here is a present for thee, good father ! to keep in remembrance
Sad, of the funeral games of Patroclus dead.—For his own self
Never again thou'lt see, 'mid the Argive host ; so I freely
Give thee a prize. No more thou'rt able to strive as a boxer,
Or in the wrestling-match, or in darting the spear, or the foot-race.
Age, interdicting this, too heavily presses upon thee."

Speaking, he gave him the goblet : the old man joyfully took it :
Spake to the chief in return ; and with wingèd accents address'd him.

"All of thy words are correct : thou'st spoken, my son ! as the truth is.
Not any longer, my friend ! are my limbs well knit and elastic ;

[g] Menelaus seems to make quite as much of the matter as it deserved.

Feet fail; nor do my arms move promptly, as erst, from my shoulders.
Would! that I now were as strong, that my might were but, now, what it once was,
When, with his sons, the Epeians to bury the king Amarynces,
Came to Buprasium's plain, giving prizes to honor the monarch.
Then, not a man was found who was equal to me; of Epeians,
Nor of the Pylian chiefs, nor Ætolia's valorous leaders.
Enops' son, with my fists, did I vanquish; the strong Clytomèdes:
Pleuron's wrestler fail'd, when we grappled together,—Ancæus:
Iphiclus, swift as he was, came in second to me, in the foot-race:
Farther I threw with the spear than Phyles or Polydorus:
Only in driving of steeds was I foil'd by the children of Actor;
They, by their number prevail'd, and eager were they for the conquest,
Seeing the prize which alone was remaining to win, was the greatest:
For they were brother-twins:—one sturdily guided the horses
—Guided the horses I say—while his brother was lashing them onward.
Such was I then:—now in turn let a new generation succeeding,
Seek such achievements as mine:—my head must bow to the burden
Old age brings; though once I was first 'mid a nation of heroes.
And it is well, thus to honor, by games, thy companion's remembrance.
Glad, too, am I to receive this gift from thy hand: and my heart glows;
For I am ever remember'd in kindness by thee, and am honor'd,
E'en as I ought to be honor'd by all of the sons of Achaia.
All of thine heart's desire, may the Gods give thee, in requital!"

Thus did he speak: and Pelides again through the crowd of Achaians,
Pass'd, having heard to an end all the praise of the offspring of Neleus.
Then he proposed the rewards for the painful strife of the boxers.
Leading a sturdy mule, which he tether'd in view, as the first prize,
Six years old, untamed, of a high spirit hard to be broken.
And for the vanquish'd placing a goblet, hollow at both ends.
Standing erect, he address'd these words to the host of the Argives.

"Atreus' son! and ye rest of the well-mail'd sons of Achaia!

Let two men stand forth, of the strongest and bravest among you,
Ready to meet and encounter with upraised fists; and whoever,
Help'd by Apollo, prevails, and as victor is own'd by Achaia,
Let him as prize convey this strong-limb'd mule to his own tent;
Leaving his vanquish'd rival the goblet hollow at both ends."

Thus did he speak; at the word rose a champion sturdy and stalwart;
Train'd in the boxer's art; son of Panopes, mighty Epeius.
Laying his hand on the mule thus he utter'd aloud his defiance.

"Let him approach at once, who is minded to bear off the goblet!
As for the mule, I assert there is none of the sons of Achaia
Who will be able to foil me. I boast myself first as a boxer!
What if, in deeds of arms, I am second to many?—Yet no man
Ever was found who could boast himself fully proficient in all things.
Therefore my foe I forewarn—what I threaten, my fist will accomplish—
Bones and body alike will I pound him to pieces!—His seconds
Let them be ready at hand—not a few will be needed—to bear him
Helpless away to his tent, when my hands have sufficiently maul'd him."

Thus did Epeius vaunt: deep silence fell on his hearers.
One man alone came forward; Euryalus, like an Immortal:
Son of the mighty Mecisteus, offspring of kingly Taläon.
He, having visited Thebes, after Œdipus' death, had contended
Thus, at his funeral games, and had vanquish'd with ease the Cadmeians.
Busy to fit him for fight, was the spear-famed hero Tydides;
Speaking with cheering advice, and with anticipations of conquest.
First did he gird up his loins with a belt for the fight; then he gave him
Gauntlets of tough bull's hide, with thongs well cut and compacted.
So, in the midst of the ring did the combatants stand forth accoutred;
Meeting and sparring at first with stalwart arms; then together
Rushing, and interchanging the heavy blows of their strong fists.
Dire was the crash of the blows on the combatants' jaws, and the sweat ran

Down from their limbs; till at last with a rush did the mighty Epeius
—Marking a wand'ring glance—strike his rival's cheek;—and he went down
Straight; for his stalwart limbs gave suddenly way underneath him.
As by the northern blast on a lee-shore driven, a great fish
Leaps on the tangled beach, when the wave sweeps heavily o'er it;
So, did he leap at the blow:—but the generous victor, Epeius,
Holding his hands, set him upright: his comrades, crowding around him,
Led him, on tottering feet, far away from the ring; and he went off
Vomiting clotted blood, with his faint head hanging on one side.
Leading him off, yet bewilder'd, they made him be seated among them;
And, upon his behalf, took the goblet hollow at both ends.

Then set Pelides forward the prizes proposed for the third game,—
Pointing them out to the host—for the wrestlers' painful encounter.
First, for the victor stood, to the blaze well adapted, a tripod;
Valued at twice six oxen by all of the sons of Achaia:
Leaving a female slave to console the defeated opponent,
Skilful in diverse arts; four oxen the sum she was priced at.
Standing erect, he address'd these words to the host of the Argives.

"Stand forth! who, in this contest, are ready to meet, as opponents!"

Thus did he speak: and at once rose the great Telamonian Ajax;
Skill'd, too, in crafty devices, the much-devising Odysseus.
First, having belted their loins, they stood in the midst of the prize-ring;
Each, with a stalwart grasp, by the elbows held his opponent:
Like to the sloping rafters, by architect skilful united,
Framed for a high-built roof, of the tempest's fury repellent.
Crackled their sturdy backs, as the muscles were strain'd to the utmost
Under their stalwart grasp; and the sweat ran trickling down them.
Thick, on the heaving sides and the shoulders of both, did the long wales
Stand up, purple with blood; and still they continued the contest;
Eager for vict'ry's fame, and the prize of the beautiful tripod.

Nor could Odysseus throw, by his skill in the game, his opponent;
Neither could Ajax' might, of Odysseus foil the endurance.
Wearied, at last, of the strife grew the well-mail'd sons of Achaia.
Then, to his foe, thus utter'd the great Telamonian Ajax.

"Zeus-born son of Laertes! O much-devising Odysseus!
Lift thou me, or be lifted!—And leave the result unto great Zeus!"

Speaking, he lifted his foe; but, with trick well remember'd, Odysseus
Struck his opponent behind, on the bend of knee, and he threw him,
Sending him down on his back; and Odysseus follow'd, and lay there,
Over his breast; at the sight much marvell'd the crowd of spectators.
At his opponent, in turn, then, the much-enduring Odysseus
Heaved, and barely succeeded to move him a little; but raised not;
For his own knees gave way[h]; and they both came over together;
Grappling side by side, they roll'd in the dust and defilement.
And they had still gone on, and had wrestled again for the third round,
Had not Achilleus risen, and thus put an end to the contest.

"Do not prolong this strife, and weary yourselves with encounters!
Each has conquer'd; and each shall receive the reward of a victor.
Now let the games be continued by some other sons of Achaia!"

Thus did the hero speak; and they readily heard, and obey'd him:
And they resumed their garments,—the dust first wiped from their bodies.

Then did Pelides proffer the prizes for speed in the foot-race.
First was a silver bowl, all richly emboss'd, and containing
Full six measures, by far the most beautiful vase in the whole earth;
It was a famous work of the clever Sidonian artists;
Over the cloudy seas then brought by Phœnician merchants
Unto the Lemnian shores, and left as a present for Thoas;

[h] This is sometimes differently translated; but the subsequent address of Achilles clearly shows that Odysseus, not Ajax, had the disadvantage in the second encounter.

Thence, by the offspring of Jason, Eunëus, sent to Patroclus[i]
—Hero-chief—as the price for Lycaon, issue of Priam[k].
Now, at the funeral games of his comrade, mighty Achilleus
Placed it, as prize for the man who was lightest of limb in the foot-race.
And to the second he offer'd a great ox, carefully fatted.
While for the third and last, a half-talent of gold he provided.
Standing erect, he address'd these words to the host of the Argives.

"Stand forth! who, in this contest, are ready to offer, as rivals!"

Thus did he speak; and at once rose the rapid Oïlean Ajax;
Next, much-devising Odysseus; Antilochus, offspring of Nestor,
Came as the third, by the youths well known as the fleetest among them.
All in a line they stood, and the bounds were defined by Achilleus.
Straight, from the starting-post, they vanish'd at speed; and the foremost
Sped forth Oïleus' son, but closely the mighty Odysseus
Press'd on his heels:—as near as a woman, daintily-girdled,
Holds to her breast her spindle, and, drawing it backward and forward,
Twines and twists her thread, still ever retaining the spindle
Near to her breast,—so near to the back of his rival Odysseus
Ran; and he trod in his steps ere the light dust settled upon them.
Thus, but a neck in the rear, did Odysseus, on his opponent
Breathe, as he ran at his speed; loud shouted the sons of Achaia,
Cheering the pair, and exhorting the hinder to further exertion.
But, as they now drew on to the end of the course, did Odysseus,
Inwardly, offer a prayer to the blue-eyed Goddess Athène.
"Hear me! and let these feet, kind Goddess! feel thine assistance!"
Such were his inward thoughts; and Pallas Athène his prayer heard;
Making his limbs all light, and his hands and feet all elastic.
Now, as they just were about on the prizes to fasten, did Ajax
Stumble and slip as he ran—he was tripp'd up by Pallas Athène—
E'en where the offal lay of the slaughter'd oxen, that died there

[i] Apparently on behalf of Achilles.
[k] See Il. xxi, v. 40.

Slain, for Patroclus' pile, by the swift-footed leader Achilleus.
Nostrils and mouth, in an instant, were fill'd with the offal of oxen:
So that, passing him by, did the much-enduring Odysseus
Seize on the silver vase; and the ox was the trophy of Ajax;
Seizing with stalwart grasp on the horn of the beast, as he sputter'd
Offal afar from his lips, thus he spake to the host of the Argives.

"Friends! I have lost my footing by means of the Goddess, who always—
As if a mother—stands by Odysseus' side, and assists him."

Such were the words of the chief; loud laughter shook the beholders.
Then with a jocund smile did Antilochus, last in the contest,
Seize the remaining prize; thus speaking aloud to the Argives.

"Though but a thing well known unto all of you, friends! I repeat it,
Still, to the elder in birth, by the Gods is honor awarded.
Ajax here, in age, of myself has a little advantage:
There is a man[1] who belongs to the men of a past generation;
Green old age, in faith, is reputed as his; and Achaia
Scarce can produce his rival—excepting, as ever, Achilleus."

Such were the words of the youth; thus praising the speed of Pelides.
Then did Achilleus speak; and thus, in reply, he address'd him.

"Nor shall it be for nought, that thy tongue, O Antilochus! proffers
Compliments: unto thy prize will I add yet another half-talent."

Speaking, he gave him a talent; and glad was the youth to receive it.

Next, in the midst of the ring, did Pelides carry, and set down
Stalwart spear and buckler, and crested helmet[m];—the armor

[1] Odysseus.

[m] The cuirass, it will be observed, is not included. Possibly as being too much damaged. Sarpedon having been killed by a spear-stroke through the breast.

Erst of the mighty Sarpedon, and taken from him by Patroclus.
Standing erect, he address'd these words to the host of the Argives.

"Let two champions now, two chiefs of the bravest among you,
Sheath'd in shining mail, and with sharpen'd spears in their right hands,
Stand forth, boldly in front, and give proof of their mutual prowess!
Whichever first is successful in piercing the mail, and attaining
Unto the flesh beneath, and in drawing the blood of his rival,
Him will I give, as the victor, a falchion studded in silver;
Beautiful Thracian weapon; I won it from Asteropæus.
Yonder armor the twain are to hold in common between them.
And, when the games are over, a banquet is theirs at my own tent."

Such were the hero's words: rose the great Telamonian Ajax;
Rose too the gallant Tydides, the valorous prince Diomèdes.
So when, apart from the throng, each chief had array'd him in armor,
Into the central space both strode, both eager for combat:
Stern and fix'd their gaze; and amazement seized the Achaians.
So when approaching nearer, the champions fronted each other,
Thrice did they make an assault, and thrice rush'd fiercely together.
Ajax drove thro' the shield of Tydides, equal on all sides,
Fiercely; yet touch'd not the flesh; for beneath was the fence of the cuirass.
Over the massive orb of his rival's buckler, Tydides
Ever at Ajax' throat sent flashing the point of his jav'lin.
'Till, for the chieftain's life apprehensive, the sons of Achaia
Bid both cease such strife, and alike take share in the prizes.
Yet in Tydides' hand was the falchion placed by the hero,
Scabbard along with the blade; and the well-cut belt that sustain'd them.

Then he a discus offer'd, a huge mass fashion'd by fusion;
One that was formerly hurl'd by the giant strength of Eëtion:
And, when the prince was slain by the arm of the mighty Achilleus,

Borne by the hero away, with the rest of the spoils, to the galleys.
Standing erect, he address'd these words to the host of the Argives.

"Stand forth! who, in this contest, are ready to offer, as rivals.
If in a land far remote one is blest with abundance of acres,
This will afford him, throughout five long years, slowly revolving,
Iron sufficient for use: to the city he need never send out
Shepherd or ploughman to buy it; he rather were able to lend it."

Thus did he speak; uprose the redoubtable chief Polypætes;
Next, like a God in battle, the strength of the mighty Leonteus;
Ajax, the great, came third; and the fourth was the sturdy Epeius.
All in a row they stood; then seizing the iron, Epeius
Whirl'd it aloft: loud laugh'd in derision the whole of Achaia.
Next was Leonteus' turn:—the redoubtable offspring of Ares—
Third in the list, from the arm of the great Telamonian Ajax,
Thunder'd the flying quoit, overpassing the throws of his rivals.
Lastly, the quoit was hurl'd by the valorous chief Polypætes;
Even as far as a crook may be hurl'd by a swain in the pastures,
Sending it, whirling before him, to frighten the herds of the oxen,
So far threw he the quoit in advance of the rest; and applauded
All the admiring host; and the comrades of strong Polypætes
Rose; and the regal gift bore off to the holds of his galleys.

Then, of the dark-gray steel, did he proffer a prize for the archers.
Ten sharp axes he brought, and ten keen hatchets beside them.
Then he a mast set up—it was that of a dark-prow'd galley—
Far, on the sands of the shore; and he bound to the summit a wild-dove,
Fast, with a slender cord by the foot; as a mark to be aim'd at;
Saying—"Whoever pierces the pigeon herself with his arrow,
Let him the whole of the axes, as victor, remove to his own tent
He who the bird hits not, but the thin cord severs beneath her,
—Showing inferior skill—let the ten keen hatchets content him."

Thus did he speak; then arose the illustrious prowess of Teucer;
Merion too; well known as Idomeneus' gallant attendant.
Placed in a brazen helmet, the lots were shaken; and Teucer's
Leap'd forth first from the helm. In an instant he levell'd his arrow,
And with impatience shot it;—neglecting to vow to the great King[n]
Hecatombs, if he assisted, of young lambs slain on his altars.
Therefore the pigeon he miss'd, for the prize was begrudged by Apollo:
Yet he the thin cord struck by the foot of the bird, which confined it;
Fairly the cord, in its flight, did the sharp shaft sever asunder.
Up to the sky, from the mast, flew the new-freed bird, and the cord fell
Dangling down to the ground. Loud clamor'd the sons of Achaia.
Merion, snatching from Teucer his weapon in haste, to the bowstring
Fitted the tip of the shaft which already he held in his right hand;
Vowing, at once, in his heart to the far-darting archer Apollo,
Hecatombs, if he assisted, of young lambs slain on his altars.
Seeking the clouds overhead, he discover'd the dove, as bewilder'd
Circling she soar'd:—by the wing in the midst of her body he struck her,
Sending the shaft right through; and it then turn'd round and descended
Close before Merion's feet:—but the stricken dove, on the mast-head
—Mast of a dark-prow'd galley—alighted again; and she sat there,
Drooping her glossy neck, with her feathers huddled about her;
Till life fled from her limbs, and she tumbled afar from her station
Dead: and the people beheld it, and marvell'd at that which they look'd on.
Therefore, the ten sharp axes did Merion take as the victor:
Unto his hollow ships were the hatchets carried by Teucer.

Then, did Pelides offer a long bright spear to be thrown for;
Also a caldron bright;—at an ox priced—sculptured in flowers:
Laying them both in the ring. Skill'd spearmen rose to contest them:
Even Atrides rose up, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon;
Merion too, well known as Idomeneus' gallant attendant.
Thus then the twain were address'd by the swift-footed leader Achilleus.

[n] Apollo.

"Well, do we know how far of us all thou art leader, Atrides! 890
Both in thy kingly might, and in prowess and skill as a spearman.
Therefore, the chiefer prize, take thou as the victor! and bear it
Off to thy ships. For the spear, upon Merion let us bestow it.
If it be pleasing to thee, I myself should propose this arrangement."

Such were the hero's words; and assented, the King Agamemnon:
Yielding the brazen spear into Merion's hands, he the caldron
Gave to Talthybius' care; as his beautiful prize in the contest.

BOOK THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

Hector's corpse, for a ransom, doth Priam redeem from Achilleus.

THEN was the ring broken up; and the people away to the galleys,
Each to his own, dispersed; and some then gat them to feasting;
Some sought slumber's refreshment. But still did the mighty Achilleus
Weep, as his memory dwelt on the loss of his friend; nor did slumber,
—Tamer-of-all—bind him: but he turn'd, now on this, now on that side;
Yearning at heart for the vigor and manly address of Patroclus;
Thinking of hardships borne, and of perils encounter'd together;
Many a well-fought field, and many a storm on the ocean.
Thus, as he thought on the past, did his tears flow, streaming profusely:
Now he attempts to repose lying down on his side; now again turns
On to his back; now again on his face to the earth:—now he starts up,
Rises; and paces, distracted, the shore of the sea; and ere morning,
Mounting the sky, had lighted the waves of the sea, and the sea-shore,
He had himself to the front of his bright car harness'd his war-steeds;
Fasten'd up Hector's corpse to be drawn on, trailing behind it;
Three times dragg'd it, encircling the tomb of the son of Menœtius;
Brought it again to the tent; and there had left it, extended,
Stretch'd out, there, in the dust, with the face turn'd down: but Apollo
Warded all evil off from the flesh of a man whom he pitied
Even although now dead; and extended his Ægis above him,
All of gold; that the skin might escape laceration and bruising.

Thus, in his fury, the hero, dishonor'd, unworthily, Hector.
And, at the sight, deep pity was constantly felt by the great Gods;

Oft they suggested the theft of the corpse to the slayer-of-Argus[a].
Not to the other Gods was the theft displeasing; but Hère
Would not assent, nor Poseidon, nor blue-eyed Pallas Athène.
Still, as of old, by the three, were Troy, and the people of Priam,
Priam himself, abhorr'd, in revenge for the folly of Paris;
Who, when the Goddesses came to his sheepfolds, jeer'd and despised them;
Choosing another[b], who proffer'd seductiveness better avoided.
But when the twelfth fair morn on the corpse yet unburied was shining,
Phœbus Apollo spake these words to the other Immortals.

"Harsh are ye all, O Gods! and vindictive in mood!—Did not Hector
Ever your altars feed with the thighs of bulls and of he-goats?
And do ye now refuse, all dead as he is, to preserve him;
So that his consort's eyes, and the eyes of his mother, and infant,
Priam's self, and the people of Priam, again may behold him:
Funeral flames may be his, and funeral honors awarded?
All of you seem combined to assist the ferocious Achilleus;
Man of unrighteous thoughts, whose heart in the midst of his bosom
Knows not ruth:—with a temper as fierce as is that of a lion,
Who, on his pride of strength, and untamable courage reliant,
Enters the crowded fold, and seizes a sheep for a banquet.
So, has Achilleus lost all feeling of pity, and knows not
Self-respect—all-important, its absence or presence to mortals.
Say, that a man is deprived of a nearest and dearest relation;
Whole-blood brother perchance, or it even may be a beloved son;
Time passes by, and at last he remits lamentation and weeping:
For an elastic mind by the Fates has been planted in man's breast.
But this man, from the day when he slew the illustrious Hector,
Tying the corpse to his car, to the tomb of his comrade belovèd
Drags it.—A deed such as this savours neither of honor nor profit.
Brave as he is, let him tremble to rouse the Immortals to anger;

[a] Hermes.
[b] Aphrodite.

'Tis but on senseless clay that the madman is heaping his insults."

Fiercely indignant, thus spake the white-arm'd Hère, in answer.

" God of the silver bow! thy suggestions might meet with approval,
If ye, in equal honor, could Hector hold, and Achilleus.
But, a mere mortal is Hector; a mortal bosom has nursed him;
While, of a Goddess, Achilles is known as the son.—I, his mother,
Nourish'd, and rear'd, and, at last, on a man bestow'd as his consort;
Peleus;—dearly-beloved above all men, he, by Immortals.
All of ye, Gods! were present to honor the wedding.—Thine own self,
—Faithless as ever—wert there; and thy lyre was heard at the banquet."

Then, in reply to the Goddess, spake Zeus, great roller-of-storm-clouds.

" Hère! Be not so deeply incensed with thy fellow-Immortals.
Not to the twain can honor be equally given.—But Hector
Dearest to Heaven was held above all within Troy; to my own self
Dearest;—for never has he been forgetful of me in his off'rings.
Never has altar of mine from his hands wanted a victim,
Incense, or rich libation:—such service he ever has render'd.
But we permit not the stealing—a feat which were never accomplish'd
But with Achilleus' knowledge—the body of Hector.—The Goddess,
Mother of mighty Pelides, by day and by night is about it.
But it were well that a God call'd Thetis hither beside me;
That I may give her advice: and, perchance, it may be that Achilleus,
Taking Priam's gifts, will Hector release for a ransom."

Such were the words of the God.—Down Iris swept, like a tempest;
And betwixt Samos' isle, and the rock-piled summit of Imbrus,
Plunged in the dark sea-wave; and the floods, as she enter'd, resounded.
Down, to the ocean-depths, she descended at once;—as a plummet,

Which, at the end of a line, running, over the casing of bull's horn[c],
Sinks; and betrays to destruction the wandering shoals of the fishes:—
There, in a hollow cave, she alighted on Thetis:—around her,
Gather'd her sister-nymphs; and the Goddess was weeping among them,
Over her own son's fate—so perfect a hero!—but destined,
Far from his native land, to be stretch'd on the fields of the Troad.
Standing beside her, thus spake the swift-footed messenger Iris.

"Thetis! Arise! Zeus calls: great God of unchangeable counsels."

Then, in reply, spake Thetis—the Goddess whose feet are as silver.

"Why does the great God lay his commands upon me?—The Immortals,
Loath am I, now, to consort with:—my heart is so sorely afflicted!
Yet, am I going:—for never his mandates are utter'd for nothing."

Thus having spoken, the Goddess her beautiful form in a dark veil
Shrouded; of purple tint; most sombre in hue of her garments.
So, she prepared to depart:—and in front was the wind-footed Iris,
Leading:—the deep sea-wave as they moved curl'd backward before them.
Up, from the beach emerging, they mounted in haste to Olympus.
There, was the broad-brow'd Zeus; and, around, were the rest of the great Gods,
Met in assembly;—the Gods who are blessèd and living for all time.
Thetis, by side of Zeus, sat her down in the seat which Athène
Offer'd; and Hère gave her a goblet of gold; and address'd her,
Speaking in kindly accents; and Thetis drank, and return'd it.
Then to the Goddess, thus, spake the Father of men and Immortals.

"Thetis! Sad as thou art, thou appearest again on Olympus,
Pining in grief unappeasèd—and well do I know what the cause is.
Yet let me tell thee this;—I have call'd thee hither to say so—

[c] The fishing-line was allowed to run over a piece of horn; in order to avoid friction against the side of the vessel.

Full nine days has contention arisen among the Immortals,
All on account of Hector, and, waster-of-cities, Achilleus.
Much, to the theft of the corpse, has been prompted the slayer-of-Argus:
But I myself design that the glory shall wait for Achilleus;
Seeking to merit thus, and preserve, thy respect and affection.
Therefore descend to the host, thine own son see, and persuade him;
Tell him, the Gods on high are enraged at his deeds;—and of all Gods
I am the most incensed; that he thus, with the rage of a madman,
Hector's body detains at the high-beak'd ships; nor will yield him.
Anger of mine if he heeds, let him Hector release for a ransom.
Iris, I will send to the great-hearted monarch, to Priam,
Bidding him ransom his son, and to visit the ships of Achaia,
Proffering gifts to Achilles, sufficient to soften his anger."

Such were the words of the God; and the Goddess, whose feet are as silver,
Listen'd; and straightway plunged to the earth from the peaks of Olympus,
Seeking her own son's tent; and her own son truly she found there,
Heavily groaning;—around him the dearest beloved of his comrades
Gave him attendance due, and were busy preparing a banquet:
Dressing a full-fleeced ram they had slain for a meal at the tent-door.
Close by the hero's side did his beautiful mother a seat take;
Soothe his hand with hers, and call him by name, and address him.

"How long, son of mine own!—is thine heart, with lamenting and wailing,
Thus to be eaten away?—Abstaining, as now, from the banquet,
And from the couch of love.—Yet of woman's love, in affliction,
Great is the solace!—And thou but a short time stay'st; for already
Death, and unyielding Fate are approaching, ready to claim thee.
But to my words attend, from Zeus come I here—for he bids me
Tell thee, the Gods on high are enraged at thy deeds; and of all Gods
He is the most incensed; that thou, with the rage of a madman,
Hector's body detain'st at the high-beak'd ships; nor wilt yield him.
Therefore the dead give up, and accept for the body a ransom!"

Then, in reply to the Goddess, the great swift-footed Achilleus.

"Let it be even so!—Let the ransom come, and I yield him:
Since with an earnest wish the Olympian seemeth to urge it."

Thus, by the sides of the galleys, were son and mother conversing:
Speaking of manifold things, and wingèd words interchanging.

Then, to the sacred city, was Iris sent by Cronïon.

"Iris, swift of wing, descend from the homes of Olympus,
Unto the Ilian town:—there, bid the magnanimous Priam
Ransom his son; and seek for this purpose the fleet of Achaia,
Carrying gifts to Pelides, sufficient to soften his anger.
Tell him to go by himself; not a Trojan chief in attendance;
Only a herald; a man well stricken in years, as the driver
Both of the mules and wain;—for a wain with wheels will be needed,
Townward to carry the dead; him slain by the mighty Achilleus.
Let not the thought of death enter into his mind, or of danger!
For, as a guide and attendant, we give him the slayer-of-Argus,
Even himself;—and the God will ensure his approach to Achilleus.
And, when the King has enter'd his dwelling, the mighty Pelides
Neither himself will slay, nor suffer others to harm him.
For he is neither devoid of perception or sense, nor unrighteous;
But to a suppliant's prayer is disposed to be gracious and yielding."

Such were the words of the God: and Iris, swift as a tempest,
Swept to the town of Priam;—and there was confusion and wailing.
There were the sons of the King, in the wide court seated around him,
Steeping their vests in tears; and the old man sat in the centre,
Shrouded from sight in his garment; and thick on his head the defilement
Ashes, and filth—lay heap'd—on the head and the neck of the old man,
Placed by his own hand there, as he roll'd in the dust in his anguish.

All through the palace-halls were his daughters, and wives of his offspring,
Wailing, as one, the departed,—the many and brave they remember'd—
Reft of their noble lives by the hands of the sons of Achaia.
Close by the side of Priam the messenger stood, and address'd him,
Speaking in accents low;—yet the monarch shook as he heard her.

"Fear not, Dardan Priam! nor suffer thy mind to be frighten'd!
Deem not I stand by thy side as a messenger only of evil;
But for thy good am I here: from Zeus sent down with a message;
Zeus; who distant far spends love and pity upon thee;
Bidding thee—such was his charge—seek to ransom the body of Hector;
Carrying gifts to Achilles, sufficient to soften his anger;
Bidding thee go by thyself; not a Trojan chief in attendance;
Only a herald; a man well stricken in years, as the driver
Both of the mules and wain;—for a wain with wheels will be needed,
Townward to carry the dead; him slain by the mighty Achilleus.
Nor let the thought of death enter into thy mind, or of danger!
For, as a guide and attendant, he gives thee the slayer-of-Argus,
Even himself;—and the God will ensure thy approach to Achilleus.
When thou'rt enter'd into the tent of Achilles, the hero
Neither himself will slay, nor suffer others to harm thee.
For he is neither devoid of perception or sense, nor unrighteous;
But to a suppliant's prayer is he ever disposed to be yielding."

Thus having spoken, away, fled the swift-footed Goddess.—The old King
Calls on his sons, and commands to make ready a wain, upon wide wheels;
Also a team of mules, and a coffer to strap to the carriage.
And he, himself, ascends to his chamber, breathing of odors;
High-roof'd, vaulted in cedar; where lay a collection of treasures.
Hecuba, then, did he call; and he spake these words to his consort.

"Lady! but now, from Zeus, has a messenger come to address me;
Bidding me ransom my son, and to visit the fleet of Achaia;
Carrying gifts to Achilles, sufficient to soften his anger.

Tell me! in thine own breast, what course seems now to be soundest?
Greatly disposed is my mind, and my spirit is urgent within me,
Urging me forth to the navy, to visit the host of Achaia."

Such were the monarch's words; and the old Queen wailingly answer'd.

"Where are thy senses gone?—for of old 'twas said that thou hadst sense,
Both by the men of Troy, and the nations who offer'd thee tribute.
Wouldst thou, alone, thus venture to visit the fleet of Achaia?
Meeting the eyes of the man who so many, alas! of thy children,
Brave as they were, has slaughter'd!—Thy heart is as iron within thee!
If in his grasp thou fall, if his eyes but fasten upon thee,
—Cannibal wretch as he is, and unfit to be trusted—he will not
Show thee respect or pity.—Far better, apart in the palace
Seated, to weep our fill for the son we have lost, at whose birth-time
Unrelenting Fate in the thread of his destiny mingled,
Far from his parents dear, to be thus, as a meal for the wild-dogs,
Thrown by a savage man;—whose body, I wish I could tear it,
Rending his vitals away;—such infliction were scarce a requital
Fit for the death of my son—who has died not the death of a dastard,
But, for the sons of Troy, and the deep-bosom'd dames of the Trojans,
Vanquish'd in standing fight—not a thought of escape or retreating."

Thus spake the ancient monarch, the godlike Priam, in answer.

"Do not, against my will, thus seek to detain me!—and be not,
Thus, in the halls of my house, like a bird of ill omen!—'Tis useless.
If from a mortal man, earth-born, had arrived the suggestion—
One of the prophet-priests, or the sacrificial diviners,
False had I held it to be, and had carefully shunn'd a compliance:
But as it is—for I saw, and I stood in the front of the Goddess—
I shall depart, and the message shall not be in vain.—If it be so,
That I am fated to die at the ships of the mailèd Achaians,
Welcome be death!—Let me fall by the hand of the mighty Achilleus,

Straining my son in my arms, and my last groans utter'd above him."

Thus did he speak; and he open'd the lids of the chests, and selected,
First, twelve glittering veils; of an excellent pattern and texture:
Twelve soft single cloaks, and an equal number of carpets;
Twelve fair robes came next; and then twelve beautiful vestures.
Ten pure talents of gold, in full weight, next he provided.
Two bright tripods he added, and then four glittering caldrons.
Last, was a beautiful goblet; the Thracians formerly gave it,
Unto the King, when he went on an embassy there; as a rich gift
Always esteem'd; e'en this in his palace the elder retain'd not,
Such was his eager desire to ransom his son:—then the Trojans
Forth from the porch he drove; and assail'd with reproach and invective.

"Off with you!—Out of my sight!—Base villains, and cowardly dastards!
Have ye no cares at home, that ye thus come here to torment me?
Or do ye hope to be richer from *my* loss;—sent by Cronïon;
—Death of my bravest son?—Ye may find to your cost it is not so!
Readier victims are ye for the swords of the sons of Achaia,
Now that *he* lies dead, who protected you all.—For my own part,
Ere that mine eyes behold this city destroy'd, and her bulwarks
Levell'd by hostile hands, may the grave gape wide to receive me!"

Thus did he speak; and he routed the throng with his staff;—and they scatter'd,
Shunning the old man's wrath.—Then he turn'd on his sons, and reproach'd them
Next, in upbraiding words:—Paris, Helenus also, and Pammon,
Agathon, godlike leader, Antiphonus too, and Polites
Famed, and Deiphobus next, and Hippothous also, and Dion,
Chieftain renown'd:—these nine did he order, in accents of insult.

"Hasten, ye evil brood!—Ye disgrace to your kin!—If ye all lay
Dead, in the place of Hector, in front of the fleet, I were happy.

Woe! to my wretched self!—I had gotten me sons, who were bravest
Far, in the realm of Troy; and now not a man is surviving;
All are gone:—brave Mnestor, the rival of Gods, and the horseman
Troilus; Hector last, who was counted a God, nor resembled
Offspring of mortal man, but was like to the race of Immortals:
All these, Ares has taken, and left me the dregs as survivors,
Light of tongue and heel, excelling in lying and dancing:
Robbers of lambs and kids, from the well-stored folds of their neighbors.—
Can ye at least not hasten, and bring me a wain, and upon it
All of my stores arrange?—that my journey may have a commencement."

Such were the old man's words; and they quail'd at his heavy reproaches.
So, they the strong-wheel'd wain brought forth for the journey; adapted
Well for mules; new made; and they fasten'd a coffer upon it.
Then, from the peg where it hung they the yoke took down; it was fitted
Well for the draught of mules, box-wood, with a knob, set with ringlets[d].
Then, nine cubits in length, to the strong yoke carried the yoke-band;
This to the polish'd pole they securely fix'd, having placed it
Right at the farther end, and fasten'd the ring on the poll-pin;
Binding it thrice to the knob, upon each of the sides; and beneath it
Fasten'd the end of the thong, and tied in a knot as a finish.
Then, from the chamber, they carried the numerous presents; and placed them
High on the polish'd wain—to be given in ransom for Hector;
Yoking in front strong mules, hard-hoof'd, and accustom'd to harness:
Sent by the Mysians, erst, as a present of value to Priam.
Then, to the car of Priam, they brought up the steeds, which the elder
Oft, at the polish'd manger, had carefully handled and patted.
Priam himself and the herald, endued with a provident foresight,
Harness the steeds for themselves, in the high-built courts of the palace.
Close to the side of the pair came Hecuba, troubled in spirit;
Bearing the wine—which assuages the grief of the heart—in her right hand,
All in a golden goblet—to pour a libation ere starting:

[d] Through which the reins passed.

Standing in front of the steeds, she her husband call'd, and address'd him.

"Here! Take this: and pour a libation to Zeus! and implore him
Safely to send thee back from the foemen's hands; if determined,
Thus, to approach yon fleet;—though not by my will is the journey.
But if it must be so, to the storm-veil'd God—to Cronïon
—He who is throned upon Ida, whose eye ever rests on the Troad—
Pray!—and beseech him to send, as a messenger, hither the great bird,—
Dearest to him among birds, and the foremost in strength—on thy right hand;
So that, thine own eyes seeing the omen of good, thus assurèd,
Boldly thy feet may approach yon ships of the sons of Achaia.
But if the broad-brow'd Zeus vouchsafe not the omen of safety,
Then do I, even myself, most earnestly warn, and entreat thee,
Seek not the Argive fleet, though eagerly longing to go there!"

Then, like a God in form, to the Queen spake Priam in answer.

"Lady! I do not intend to refuse to adopt thy suggestions:
Good is it, ever, to pray unto Zeus, and implore his compassion."

Thus, as the elder spake, he commanded the chief of his household,
Bidding her bring pure water, and pour on his hands;—she approach'd him,
Bearing the ewer of water and basin in hand; as the King said.
So, having wash'd his hands, he the goblet received from his consort;
Then, in the midst of the court, did he stand and pray, and with eyes turn'd
Full on the skies, spake thus,—as he pour'd of the wine a libation.

"Zeus, Father! throned upon Ida, most mighty and glorious monarch!
Grant, that the dreadful Achilles receive me with pity and friendship!
And, as a sign of this, send thy messenger hither, the great bird,—
Dearest to thee among birds, and the foremost in strength—on my right hand;

So that, my own eyes seeing the omen of good, thus assurèd,
Boldly my feet may approach yon ships of the sons of Achaia!"

Thus did the monarch pray;—and his prayer reach'd Zeus, who assented;
So, he an eagle sent, great hunter of game, of a dun hue;
Lordliest bird that flies, and call'd, from its color, the Dusky.
Wide as a high-built hall in the house of a wealthy retainer,
Spreads its entrance gates, well fitted with bolts, did the great bird
Spread, upon either side, his dark broad wings, on the right hand,
Holding a flight, high aloft, o'er the city of Troy:—as they saw it,
Much they rejoiced at heart, and their bosoms were lighten'd within them
Hastily, then, did the elder his own car mount; and he drove it,
Forth from the palace-gate, and the colonnade loudly resounding.
And, in the front of the King, was Idæus, driving the four-wheel'd
Wain, and the team of mules, and the costly freight, and behind them
Follow'd the monarch's steeds; and the old man drove them, at full speed,
Down, through the streets of the city; behind him a troop of his best friends,
Follow'd him, weeping and wailing, as if he were gone to destruction.
When they the city had traversed, and pass'd from the gates to the wide plain,
Then, did the train turn back unto Ilion's walls, and regain'd them,
Sons and sons-in-law:—but broad-brow'd Zeus, he forgat not
That old pair, now seen by themselves on the plain;—and he pitied
Much that aged King:—and he Hermes call'd, and address'd him.

"Hermes! thou, of the Gods, best lovest to seek as companion
Mortal man, and to listen to what he may say, if agreeable!
Fly hence!—Priam the King, to the hollow ships of Achaia,
See thou conduct; and ensure that none of the rest of the Argives
Know of the elder's approach, ere he stand in the front of Pelides."

Such were the words of Zeus, and the slayer-of-Argus obey'd them.
Hastily under his feet did he fasten the beautiful sandals,

Golden, ambrosial, bearing the wearer aloft, like the wind's breath,
Over the face of the ocean, and o'er the expanse of the dry land.
Then took his staff, wherewith he the eyelids closes of mortals,
—Those whom he wills to compose—then, again, uprouses from slumber.
Holding the staff in his hands, the redoubtable slayer-of-Argus
Flew; and he soon arrived at the Hellespont broad, and the Troad.
Then, for his further course, he the likeness assumed of a young prince,—
Youth's first down on his lips—the delightfulest part of existence.
But when the twain had pass'd by the tumulus heap'd above Ilus,
There, pulling up their mules and horses awhile, they allow'd them
Drink from the running stream; and the darkness rapidly deepen'd.
Then, as he came up slowly, regarding him keenly, the herald
Saw the approach of Hermes; and Priam he call'd and address'd him.

"Take good heed, son of Dardanus! prudence is urgently needed.
I can a man discern, and I fear he may presently slay us.
Let us abandon the steeds; or approach him, and make supplication,
Grasping his knees in prayer—if perchance he may pity and spare us."

Such were Idæus' words, and the elder was stricken with terror.
Straight upright did the hairs stand over his limbs; in a panic
Silent and still he remain'd: then, near him, the patron of lucre
Came; and the hand of the elder he took in his own, and address'd him.

"Whither, O father! thus, art guiding thy mules and thy horses,
Through the ambrosial night, when all men else are reposing?
Is not thy mind disturb'd by a dread of the sons of Achaia?
Foes, so warlike, and fierce, and hostile gathering near thee?
If, 'mid the gloom of night, one of these should chance to discern thee,
Freighted richly as now, how then would thy mind be affected?
For, not a youth thyself, thou an old man hast as attendant,
Little adapted to meet, and repel in his wrath, an assailant.
But, as for me, I neither will harm thee myself, nor will suffer
Others to work thee wrong;—for I look on my father's resemblance."

Then, to the God, spake the elder, the godlike Priam, in answer.

"Yes! It is even so, dear youth! it is all as thy tongue says!
But, a protecting hand, some God has surely extended,
Over my path, when he sent such a guide as thyself to await me;
One of auspicious appearance, of beauty and form such as thine are;
Bearing a prudent mind, and a blessing and pride to his parents."

Then, in reply to the King, spake the messenger, slayer-of-Argus.

"All of thy words are correct! Thou'st spoken throughout as the truth is.
Only resolve me this, and reply to me fully and truly!
All these stores of wealth, so abundant and rich—do ye take them
Unto a foreign land, as a means of ensuring their safety?
Or, are ye all commencing the sacred town to abandon?
Stricken with fear at the loss of the bravest of all of your heroes,—
Thine own son—who in battle was ever a match for Achaia?"

Then, to the God, spake the elder, the godlike Priam, in answer.

"Excellent youth! Who art thou? and who are the parents that bare thee?
Thou, that alludest thus to my brave and unfortunate offspring?"

Then, in reply to the King, spake the messenger, slayer-of-Argus.

"Only to test what I know, thou askest me, father! of Hector.
Him, full keenly and long, in the heat of the glorious battle,
Mine own eyes have watch'd, on the day when he drove to the galleys
All of the Argive hosts, and he slaughter'd them there with his sharp spear.
We stood by, and regarded with wonder the sight: for Achilleus
Suffer'd us not to engage; so wroth was he, still, with Atrides.
I am the chief's attendant; the same strong galley convey'd us.

I am of Myrmidon race, and my father's name is Polyctor:
He is a man of wealth; and an old man, even as thou art:
Six sons has he at home, and myself, that am here, am the seventh;
Casting the lots with them I alone was selected to serve here.
Now am I taking my course from the ships to the plain: with the morning's
Light, will the walls of the town be assail'd by the martial Achaians;
For, they are weary of sitting at ease in their tents; and their ardor
Cannot be longer restrain'd by the leaders and kings of Achaia."

Then to the God, spake the elder, the godlike Priam, in answer.

"If thou, in truth, art attending on Peleus' offspring, Achilleus,
Tell me the whole of the truth, and do not attempt to conceal it!
Still, by the side of the ships, lies the corpse of my son?—or dismember'd
Has it been thrown to the dogs, by command of the dreadful Achilleus?"

Then, in reply to the King, spake the messenger, slayer-of-Argus.

"Father! as yet, on thy son not a dog has been feeding, nor vulture.
Still does the body remain by the ship of Achilles, extended,
E'en in the hero's tent: twelve mornings have pass'd since it lay there:
Yet, is the flesh of the corpse uncorrupted, and sound; and it breeds not
Worms, those creeping things, ever ready to prey upon slain men.
Ever around yon tomb of his own well-lovèd attendant,
E'en at the dawn of day, he the body drags; but his insults
Do not affect thy son: thyself wouldst marvel, to see him
Lying as fresh as the dew: all the blood from the corpse has been wash'd off,
That not a stain is left; and the whole of his wounds have been closed up,
Those, that his body bore; for many a weapon has pierced him.
Therefore, be well assured, that the blessèd Gods for thy brave son
Care, all dead as he is; and he still is with favor regarded."

Such were the words of the God; and, rejoicingly, answer'd the elder.

"It is a good thing, son! to do honor, with gifts, to the altars
Of the immortal powers;—my own child, while in existence,
Ne'er, in his home, neglected the Gods who inhabit Olympus.
So, in his day of death, by the great Gods, he is remember'd.
But, as a gift from myself, accept this beautiful goblet;
Keep it with care; and myself, with the favoring aid of the great Gods,
Safely escort, and guide to the tent of the mighty Pelides."

Then, to the King, in reply, spake the messenger, slayer-of-Argus.

"Father! I am but a youth; yet, in vain, is proposed the temptation;
Asking me thus to accept of a gift, without leave of Achilleus.
Him I respect too much, and I hold him in awe, and I dare not
Rob him:—an evil end were sure, if I did, to befall me.
Yet am I ready to guide thee, if 'twere unto Argos the far-famed,
Either in galley swift, or on foot, as a faithful attendant;
Nor will a man be disposed, in despite of thy guide, to molest thee."

Speaking, the God of gain sprang up to the steeds, and the chariot:
Snatch'd at the glitt'ring scourge; and he handled the reins; and he then breath'd
Vigor, renew'd, for the course, in the stalwart mules and the horses.
When they arrived at the wall, and the towers that girdled the galleys,
There, at the sides of the ships, were the watch engaged on their suppers:
On them a deep sleep fell from the messenger, slayer-of-Argus;
As he the bolts drew back, and the gates set open; and through them
Guided the King; and the waggon that carried the wonderful ransom.
When they, at last, arrived at the tent of the mighty Pelides,—
High-built structure, rear'd by the Myrmidon troops for their monarch,
Building the walls of larch, and above, as a covering o'er it,
Thatching the roof with reeds, collected in heaps from the marshes;
Round it they also constructed an ample court for the monarch;

Well stockaded with stakes; and one great larch-tree the portal
Barr'd; it was barely lifted by three of the common Achaians:
Three, with united effort, the great tree wearily lifting,
Open'd and closed it:—alone, did Achilleus easily move it.
This, did the God of lucre, set wide apart for the elder;
Bringing in him, and the presents prepared for the mighty Pelides;
Down from the steeds he descended, and spake to the King, and address'd him.

"Know, old man! that a God, an Immortal, standeth before thee:
Hermes: sent by my Father himself, as a guide and attendant.
Now, I return once more to mine own abodes; and I go not
Under the eyes of Achilles;—it is not fitting and seemly
Thus, in familiar sort, for a God to commingle with mortals.
Enter then in thyself, and the knees embrace of Pelides!
And by his aged father and fair-hair'd mother, beseech him,
And by his son; it is thus that his mind may be soonest affected."

Thus having spoken, the God to the long steep range of Olympus,
Parted; and Priam, in speed, descended to earth from the chariot;
Leaving Idæus behind; and he stay'd with the mules and the horses;
Staying, to tether them up; but the old King enter'd the dwelling
Where Zeus-favor'd Achilles continued to sit; and he found him
Seated within:—save two, he had parted with all his attendants;
Alcimus, offspring of Ares, and gallant Automedon: these two
Waited upon their prince; and he just had concluded a supper,
Meat and drink having tasted; the table yet standing before him;
When, unobserved, great Priam the tent door enter'd, and coming
Close in the front of Achilles, his knees embraced, and his hands kiss'd:
Kiss'd those murderous hands that so many had slain of his offspring.
As by malignant fate when a man pursued, in his own land
Stain'd with the guilt of blood, seeks refuge abroad, and arrives at
Some rich prince's abode, and the wonder excites of beholders;
Not less amazement seized on Achilleus, gazing on Priam;

Not less amazed, at the sight, their looks interchanged the attendants.
Priam, the while, thus address'd, and in supplication, the hero.

"Think of thine own old father! remember him, godlike Achilleus!
How, he is like to myself, on the ultimate limit of old-age!
He, it perchance may happen, is harass'd by turbulent neighbors;
Not a protector near him, to furnish him aid and protection;
Yet, even he, when he hears that thyself, his son, art surviving,
Then, is he cheer'd at heart; and he passes his days in the fond hope
He may his son, once more, look upon, when return'd from the Troad.
No such comfort for me!—ill-fated wretch!—Amid Troy's sons,
I had the bravest begotten; and now not a son is surviving*.
Fifty, were mine, on the morning when first came here the Achaians;
Nineteen sons, of the fifty, a single mother produced me;
All of the rest were borne by the concubines lodged in my palace.
Many had fallen in battle, their strong limbs slacken'd by Àres;
Yet had I one surviving, the stay of his town and his kinsmen;
He, in his country's cause, who was slain, but of late, by thy right hand;
Hector!—for sake of him do I visit the fleet of Achaia:
Praying thy grace and compassion, and bearing an excellent ransom.
Therefore, the Gods revere! and have pity upon me, Achilleus!
Thinking of thine own sire!—More worthy am I of compassion!
I, who have that endured which no man ventured before me;
Kissing a man on the hand which is stain'd with the blood of my own son."

Then, at the thought of his father, the hero yielded to sorrow.
Gently, a touch of his hand put the elder aside, and in silence
Both of them thought of the absent; the King for the homicide Hector,
Bitterly wept, extended in dust at the feet of Achilleus.
While, for his aged sire, and then, in his turn, for Patroclus,
Gush'd Pelides' tears, and the dwelling resounded with wailing.
But when the yearning of sorrow had ceased in the breast of Achilleus,

* Ignoring, as worthless, the nine from whom he had just parted. They seem, however, to be included in the next enumeration.

When he was sated of grief, and his limbs were weary of wailing,
Up from his throne he arose, and extending his hand to the old man,
Raised him up; for he pitied his hoary head, and his gray beard;
And reassured him thus; as, in wingèd words, he address'd him.

"Poor old man! what troubles thy spirit hath had to encounter!
How is it, thou hast ventured, alone, 'mid the fleet of Achaia,
Under the eyes of a man who so many and brave of thine offspring,
Slaughter'd—as I have slaughter'd?—Thine heart must be fashion'd of iron.
Sit then down on a seat, and let us, in concert, endeavor
Each to relieve his mind from the sorrow that sorely afflicts it.
Nothing of good results from indulging in chill lamentation:
Grief is the common texture of life for unfortunate mortals,
Woven for them by the Gods, who themselves know nothing of sorrow.
For, by the threshold of Zeus, stand two urns; each of them holding
Gifts, for bestowal on man; one of evils, the other of blessings.
He for whom thundering Zeus commingles the contents of both urns,
Now, has a prosperous season; and, now, has a time of affliction.
He upon whom Zeus sends, unmingled with blessing, the evil,
Driven by stern destitution to wander on earth, as an outcast,
Passes a vagrant life, not honor'd by Gods nor by mortals.
So was it that, from his birth, did the Gods bestow upon Peleus
Many and brilliant gifts; for in wealth, and in happy condition,
All men yielded to him. He was Prince of the Myrmidon nation;
And, though a mortal, to him was a Goddess given in wedlock.
Yet, upon him, has the God brought something of evil, denying
Sons, to succeed in his palace, in line of regal succession.
One son, alone, he begat—prematurely to die:—one who does not
Tend on his aged sire, but, far from the land of his fathers,
Stays on the shores of Troy; as a curse to thyself and thy children.
Thou, old man! 'tis said, wert fortunate also, of old time:
Upward, to Macar's seat, where the region is bounded by Lesbos,
Even to Phrygia's hills, and to Hellespont's shores, in the whole land
None, in his sons and wealth, was reputed as happy as thou wert.

But ever since this affliction has visited thee, from the High Ones,
Always, around thy town, has been battle, and slaughter of heroes.
Bear up then ! nor indulge an unceasing and vain lamentation !
All unavailing thy grief for thy son who's departed !—thou canst not
Raise him again into life, but thou mayst suffer as he did."

Then to Pelides, thus, spake the godlike Priam, in answer.

" No seat offer to me, great Zeus-born hero !—while Hector
Lies, in the midst of thy tents, unheeded on earth !—but release him
Quickly, and suffer mine eyes to behold him again ;—and the ransom
Take !—it is here in abundance ; and mayst thou enjoy it !—and safe back
Sail to thy native land !—since thus thou'st deign'd to preserve me ;
Bidding me live, and my eyes once more unclose on the sunshine."

Then, with a look disturb'd, spake the swift-footed leader Achilleus.

" Old man ! do not proceed to arouse me to anger !—I purposed,
Hector to yield thee up : from Zeus had a messenger reach'd me,
Even the mother who bare me, the child of the Ancient of Ocean.
And, for thyself, I am sure, and thou canst not, Priam ! deny it,
One of the Gods has conducted thee here to the ships of Achaia.
Not by himself had a mortal, in youth's best vigor, succeeded,
Seeking to enter the host : for the guards he had never evaded :
Nor had he easily drawn those bars that fasten the portals.
Do not proceed, then, further my feelings to rouse ! or I may not
Longer, perchance, endure thyself in my tent ; but reject thee,
Suppliant e'en as thou art ; and dishonor the mandate of great Zeus."

Such were the hero's words ; and the old man fear'd, and obey'd them.
Forth, from the tent, rush'd out, like a lion anger'd, Pelides.
Nor did he go by himself, but with him two trusty attendants ;
Gallant Automedon one, and the other was Alcimus ; honor'd,
After Patroclus' death, above all of his train, by Achilleus.

They from the yokes unloosen'd the stalwart mules, and the horses;
Making descend from his station the herald who came with the old man,
And on a seat they bade him his body repose;—and the rich gifts
Next from the wain unloaded, the glittering ransom of Hector.
Two rich robes and a garment, of curious texture, they left there;
Shrouded in them that the body might cover'd arrive at its own home.
Then, they the female slaves commanded to wash, and anoint it;
Taking it out of sight; lest Priam, seeing his offspring,
Yielding to anguish of heart at the sight of his son, should be tempted
Into a burst of passion, and anger the heart of Achilleus;
And that the hero slay him, despising the mandate of great Zeus.
When, by the female slaves, had the corpse been wash'd and anointed,
Round it, a robe they wrapp'd, and a glittering garment:—Achilleus
Lifting the corpse, himself, then placed it, on high, on a pallet;
And, with his comrades' aid, he the whole arranged on the waggon.
Then did he utter a groan, and he call'd on the name of his dead friend.

"Be not offended, Patroclus! if thou, in the regions of Hades,
Hearest of what I have done, thus restoring the body of Hector,
Unto his father dear; who has paid no contemptible ransom:
And, unto thee, will a share, not unworthy thyself, be devoted."

Thus having spoken, again, to his tent went the mighty Achilleus.
There, he resumed his place, on the inlaid seat, where he first sat,
Out by the farther wall; and he thus spake again unto Priam.

"Lo! it is done, old man!—and thy son is restored, as thou askedst.
Stretch'd on a pallet he lies; and thyself, in the light of the morning,
Taking him hence mayst view him.—But now let us think of refreshment!
Sustenance seemly was taken by Niobe, she of the bright locks;
When, in the walls of her palace, her twelve fair children had all died;
Six of them daughters; and six were sons in the blossom of manhood.
All of the sons were slain by the silvery shafts of Apollo,
Wroth as he was with the mother;—and Artemis slaughter'd the daughters;

All in revenge for the insult by Niobe offer'd to Leto,
Boasting her numerous issue, compared with the two of the Goddess:
Who, if they were but two, yet they slaughter'd their numerous rivals.
Nine long days did the corpses unburied remain;—to inter them
None was found, for the people were turn'd into stone by Cronïon.
Nine days pass'd, on the tenth they were buried by hands of the High Ones.
Then did she think of food, when her eyes grew weary of weeping.
Now, amid rocks and stones, on the hill-sides, bare and deserted,
Where, it is said, is the couch of the Goddesses haunting the mountains,
They, who in light dance trip by the banks of the famed Achelòus,
Stiffen'd herself into stone, her misfortunes ever she broods o'er.
Therefore, revered old man! let us also think of refreshment!
And with the morrow's light having carried thy son to his own town,
Over him weep as thou wilt!—Great reason thou hast to lament him."

Then did Achilleus rise, and a white sheep slay; his attendants,
Flaying the silvery fleece from the carcass, cleverly dress'd it,
Cutting it up with skill, and on bright spits placing the cutlets,
These did they carefully cook, and remove when the broil was completed.
Then were the portions of bread by Automedon laid on the table,
Each on a glittering salver; the meat it was served by Achilleus.
So, on the welcome fare, did they fall as it sputter'd before them;
And when their thirst was slaked, and the keenness of hunger abated,
Dardan Priam sat, and regarded with wonder Achilleus,—
Such, and so mighty, the man—so like in his mien to the great Gods.
While upon Dardan Priam in wonder was gazing Achilleus,
Noting his noble features, and weighing the words that he utter'd.
Then when the twain were weary of gazing the one on the other,
Godlike Priam thus spake first to his host, and address'd him.

"Grant me repose, at once, great Zeus-born prince!—and permit us
Seeking the couch to enjoy yet again sweet slumber's refreshment.
For, from the fatal time when my son fell, slaughter'd by thine hand,
Ne'er have the eyelids closed on my weeping eyes,—I have always—

Passing my time in groans—kept brooding alone on my sorrows ;
Rolling myself on the ground, in the ashes, and dust, and defilement.
Now I have tasted food, and again has the sparkling vintage,
Moisten'd my mouth—but before I had tasted nought of refreshment."

Thus did he speak ; and Pelides commanded his maids and attendants,
In the alcove of the tent to make ready the pallets, arranging
Beautiful cushions of purple, and blankets adding, and laying
Soft-hair'd rugs at the top, to be drawn for a covering o'er them.
Torches in hand, from the dwelling, the maids went forth, on the errand ;
Soon, by their willing hands, were the beds arranged, as commanded.
Bantering then, to his guest, spake the swift-footed leader Achilleus.

" Outside, good old friend ! is thy bed to be found.—Some Achaian,
One of the council, perchance, may be here to consult me—they always
Come unto me for advice, and it now has arrived at a custom.
Should such a one come here, in the gloom of the night, and perceive thee,
He would at once inform Agamemnon, shepherd-of-people.
And there, perchance, would then, be delay in redeeming thy dead son.
But do thou tell to me this, and be certain thou answerest rightly—
How many days do ye wish, for the funeral honors of Hector?
For such a time, from the war I myself will abide, and the host keep."

Then to Pelides, again, spake the godlike Priam in answer.

" If thou in truth art willing to let me thus bury my Hector,
Acting thus, O Achilles ! the favor is great, thou concedest.
We in the city, thou know'st, are coop'd up close ;—and the firewood
Far on the mountain lies ; and the Trojans are stricken with panic.
Nine full days do we wish in the palace to wail and lament him ;
Then, on the tenth, would we bury him ; giving a feast to the people.
On the eleventh morn, we erect a big tumulus o'er him.

And on the twelfth let us battle—if battle, again, then it *must* be."

Then to the King, in reply, spake the swift-footed noble Achilleus.

"So let it then be arranged, old Priam! in all as thou askest.
E'en for the time thou'st said, will I see that the war is suspended."

Thus did the hero speak, and extended his own, and the elder's
Right hand grasp'd; that his mind might be easy, and rest in assurance.
So, in the porch of the dwelling, the old men slumber'd together;
Priam, and herald Idæus—dispensers of provident counsel.
But, in the inner recess of the dwelling, slumber'd Achilleus;
And by the side of the hero, Brisèis, daintily-featured.

All night long, did the Gods and the warrior-chiefs of the people,
Master'd by sleep, partake the refreshment and sweetness of slumber.
But upon Hermes' brows—God of gain—no slumber descended:
Much he debated in mind how safest, evading the gate-wards,
Priam the King to conduct to the town back again from the galleys.
So, at the head of the King, did the Deity stand, and address him.

"Is then thy mind, old man! unsuspicious of evil—and sleep'st thou
Sound, amid hostile hosts, having thus been preserved by Achilleus?
Back is thy son restored, it has cost thee abundance of ransom,
But for thyself, yet living, the ransom would surely be tripled
By thy remaining sons, if thy presence were known to Atrides,
Even the great Agamemnon, and all of the sons of Achaia."

Such were his words, and in terror the old King waken'd the herald.
And for the twain did Hermes the strong mules yoke, and the horses;
And through the army he led them, and not an Achaian perceived them.

When they arrived at the ford of the wide river, whirling in eddies,
Xanthus, sacred stream—great Zeus was the source of the river—

Hermes mounted again to the heights of the happy Olympus.
When, upon earth was the morning arising, in mantle of saffron,
They, to the walls of the city, the steeds, with lamenting and wailing,
Drove; and in rear, by the mules, was the dead-man carried; and no one—
None 'mid the sons of Troy and her well-zoned daughters—discern'd them;
Only Cassandra, in form like the golden Queen Aphrodìte,
Mounting the tow'r of Troy, saw the figure beloved of her father,
Standing erect on his car, the attendant herald beside him:
Saw, too, the mules that carried the dead man, stretch'd on a pallet.
Then did she utter a scream, and exclaim'd unto all of the city.

"Trojans! and Trojan wives! here is Hector to meet, and to gaze on!
Meet him again! if ye ever have hail'd him as victor from battle,
Entering Troy;—the delight, as he was, of her town and her people."

Such were Cassandra's words; not a man, not a woman, remain'd there.
All of them went from the wall, such invincible sorrow possess'd them.
Close to the gates of the town, they encounter'd the wain, with the dead man.
First, did his much-loved wife, and his mother, rushing upon him,
Mounting the car, rend off their locks on his breast, and embrace him,
Holding the corpse by the head; and the crowd stood weeping beside them.
And for the whole of the day, till the set of sun, had they stood there,
Out in the front of the gates, over Hector weeping and wailing:
Had not the old King risen, and call'd from his car to the people.

"Open a way for the mules! and permit them to pass!—Ye can surfeit,
All of your souls with weeping, so soon as I come to the palace."

Thus did he speak; they divided, and yielded a way for the waggon.
So, when the train arrived at the sumptuous palace, they there laid
High, on a couch of splendor, the body of Hector, and minstrels

Placed, for the funeral dirge; then a long loud strain of lamenting
Broke, from the minstrel-band; and the groans of the women responded.
First, of the mournful dirge, did Andrómache make a commencement;
Holding his head in her hands, she lamented the homicide Hector.

"Husband beloved! thou'st gone, in the pride of thy youth; and hast left me,
Widow'd behind in thy palace; thy child too, a helpless infant;
Child of a hapless couple, of thee and of me!—one who will not
Ever, I deem, grow up;—this city will surely be hurl'd, first,
Down, from her towering height; left now without thee to defend her:
Thee, so long the preserver of her, of her mothers, and young babes:
Doom'd now, quickly, I fear, to be carried afar in the galleys;
I too, doom'd, as the rest:—and, my child! if alive with thy mother,
Hard will thy lot stand then, consign'd to debasing employment;
Serving a savage lord.—Or, perchance, some son of Achaia,
Seizing my child, will hurl him afar from the wall—as a vengeance
Vow'd, in his wrath, for the death of a brother who perish'd by Hector,
Or of a father, or son.—For many are they, of Achaia,
Who, by the arm of Hector, have bitten the dust in the battle.
For not a mild-manner'd man was thy father, my son! when the strife raged;
Therefore, the people, thus, in the city, lament and bewail him.
Bitter and deep is the sorrow, thy death brings down on thy parents,
Hector!—But *I* have a grief yet deeper and nearer than theirs is.—
I never felt that hand give a last fond touch from thy death-bed;
Not one parting word was bestow'd on thy wife; to be treasured,
Day and night, in her tears; as the last sad link of remembrance."

Weeping she spake; and the women responded in groanings around her.
Hecuba spoke out next, in the dreary succession of wailing.

"Hector! my much-loved son, far dearest to me of my offspring;
Even when living thou wert acceptable, aye, to the great Gods;

And in the hour of death, their care still seems to attend thee.
Many the sons of mine who have captive been led by Achilleus;
Them, whosoever they were, hath he sold far away o'er the ocean,
Unto the Samian isle, or to Lemnos rude, or to Imbros.
Thee, when thy noble soul had been 'reaved by his spear, he has hurried
Round his companion's tomb, his beloved friend, fallen Patroclus,
Him, whom thine own arm slew.—Yet he fail'd, even thus, to revive him.
As for thyself, all fresh, as the new-fall'n dew, in the palace
Calmly thou liest, like a corpse whom the silvery archer Apollo,
Aiming his mildest shaft, has o'ertaken, and fatally stricken."

Thus spake the weeping mother; a deep groan echoed around her.
Helen, third of the train, came next in succession of wailing.

"Hector! dearest, by far, unto me, of the whole of thy kindred!—
I have a husband, in truth, in the fair-form'd prince Alesander;
Who to the Troad brought me.—Oh! would I had died ere I saw him!
Nineteen years have pass'd, and the twent'eth is rapidly waning,
Since I departed forth, and deserted the land of my fathers.
Yet, have I never endured from thyself a reproach, or a harsh word:
But, if it ever chanced that some others of those in the palace,
Brothers-in-law, or husbands of sisters, or female relations,
Even the Queen herself—for the King, he was ever indulgent,
E'en as a father—assail'd me, thy voice ever rose, to restrain them;
Ever, with gentle kindness, and gentle words, intervening:
Therefore, I weep for thy loss, and my own, in distraction of spirit;
For, thro' the breadth of Troy, I have now not another, who treats me
Kindly, or e'en as a friend:—all turn from my face with a shudder."

Thus spake the weeping dame; and the groans of the people responded.
Then, did the old King, Priam, the Trojans address, and command them.

"Go! and the wood procure, and convey to the town! apprehend not
Ambush of Argive bands, intercepting retreat; for Achilleus

Gave me a promise, himself, ere he sent me away from the galleys.
Until the twelfth morn comes, no hostile force shall molest us."

Thus did the monarch speak; and they, under the yokes of the waggons,
Harness'd the oxen and mules, and departed at once from the city.
Nine long days did they spend in collecting the wood for the burning:
But when the tenth fair morning illumined the earth with her rising,
Then, and with streaming eyes, did they carry the valorous Hector,
And, on the funeral pile, they his body disposed; and the pile fired.
And when the earliest Morning appear'd, with her fingers of roses,
Then, by the pile of Hector, the people were gather'd together;
And when they all were collected, and crowded around, in a dense mass,
First, through the whole of the pile, what remain'd of the fire, they extinguish'd,
Pouring the sparkling wine on the smould'ring ashes; his brethren,
Then, and his grieving friends, while the warm tears thickly descended,
Over their cheeks, collected the fire-blanch'd bones of the hero.
These, in a coffer of gold did they carefully range, and upon it
Coverlets spread, soft-tissued, resplendent, and gleaming in purple.
Then, in a hollow vault, they deposit the whole; and the cave's mouth
Close with a pile of stones, full many, of ample dimensions.
Heaping a tumulus o'er them: the guards kept watch as they heap'd it,
Dreading a sudden attack by the well-mail'd sons of Achaia.
So, when the tomb was raised, they dispersed for a while—but again met,
Summon'd to share in the solemn funereal feast, in the banquet
Worthily spread in the palace of Priam, the heaven-born monarch.

Such were the funeral honors of Hector, tamer-of-war-steeds.

THE END.

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